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COMPITUM;

Vol. 5

OR,

THE MEETING OF THE WAYS

AT THE

Catholic Church.

THE FIFTH BOOK.

LONDON:
C. DOLMAN, 61, NEW BOND STREET.

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Compitum.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

THE ROAD OF THE TREE OF EVIL.

Forest scenery changes from time to time as we advance through hollows and upland, heathy spaces and sandy ravines, verifying often what a philosopher observes, that "the natural is symbolical of the spiritual world," so that if we describe the features of the wood and ground in natural terms, and convert these only into the corresponding spiritual terms, we shall elicit a spiritual in place of the physical truth, although no one would have predicted such a result from a bare literal transposition. Within the forest we may use forest language, and since one man approaches the centre by this road, another by that, repeat the rustic saying, which explains the object of our continued wandering—"Every bird has its decoy, and every man is led and misled in a way peculiar to himself."

"Mille viæ ducunt homines per sæcula Romam,
Qui Dominum toto quærere corde volunt.
Est via quæ ducit montes directa per altos,
Vepribus et spinis arduitate gravis :
Est quoque nonnullus callis quem calculus asper
Asperat, et plantas quotidianus arat ;
Est via per pontum, via per deserta, per imas
Valles, per scopulos, per loca dura pedi :
Per nemus et latebras, per lustra timenda ferarum,
Per spinas, tribulos, per lutulenta vada*."

Roads corresponding to the sixth journey of St. Bonaventure which he terms the experimental foretaste of eternal things,

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* Alani Magni liber Parabolarum.

receive us here through the darkness of a pass which, at the commencement, leads in a directly opposite sense from the centre. A harsh continued scream from the dense wood, mingled with a faint plaintive cry, which soon ceases, denotes the presence of some bird of prey in the act of seizing upon its victim. This is a melancholy presage; and the impression is increased by the scenery; for caverns yawn on every side, and deep gulphs threaten destruction to the unwary traveller. What subtle hole is this, whose mouth is covered with rude-growing briars; upon whose leaves are drops of new-shed blood as fresh as morning dew distilled on flowers? A very fatal place it seems to me. This spot may represent the turning where men enter into the orbit which astrologers style the traversary planet, where they leave all good traces to wander through what Henry Suso calls the region of dissimilitude[*], in order to take a fatal road, of which, whoever follows it may say, with Ulysses, I chose

—— δολιχὴν ὁδὸν, ὄφρ' ἀπολοίμην[†].

It represents the spot where men strike off from the direction of the glorious centre to follow some one, or many, of the descending, transversal, crooked, and cursed paths formed by the serpent when he glided to our first mother through God's paradise, where, as on a steep precipice, the boundaries of virtue terminate; where, to use Schiller's words, "heaven and hell are separated; where heroes have stumbled, where they have fallen, and left behind a name loaded with curses; where, too, heroes have paused, checked their course, and risen to immortality."

Some who have followed all these tracks now before us we must interrogate, as their experience will be found to prove, that at all times issues to Catholicity from the very worst of them exist. "Interrogate quemlibet de viatoribus—for no one," adds St. Odo of Cluny, "understands the ways of Divine Providence towards the evil unless he who is a wayfarer[‡]." The forest itself seems conscious that these paths are all even fresh worn by the serpent's folds.

> "'T will vex thy soul to hear what I shall speak;
> For I must talk of murders, thefts, and massacres,
> Acts of black night, abominable deeds,
> Complots of mischief, treason, villanies
> Ruthful to hear."

The ancient naturalist would represent the trees as having no other companions but the innocent; for, speaking of a certain

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[*] Dialog. I.

[†] xvii. 426.

[‡] S. Od. Cluny, Mor. in Job. lib. xv.

incense-bearing tree, he says, that "in the woods containing it no one ever pilfers what has been marked as the property of another; whereas, at Alexandria, where it is sold, no one can guard his shop sufficiently, however great may be the penalty;" from which he draws a general conclusion, saying, "Tanto minus fidei apud nos pœna, quam apud illos silvæ habent *." Calderon, on the contrary, in the Alcade of Zalamea, represents Isabella saying, "It is in forests that all crimes find asylum." In them, at all events, both victims and criminals are found It was in the unfrequented wood, as old familiar ballads say, that

> "those pretty babes, with hand in hand,
> Went wandering up and down,
> Who never more could see the man
> Approaching from the town;
> Whose pretty lips with blackberries
> Were all besmear'd and dyed;
> Who when they saw the darksome night,
> There sate them down and cried."

It was in such a spot as this that they wandered long, till death did end their grief. We must finish the child's tragedy, whatever may be thought of us; or, as a noble French lady used to say, "Qui qu'en grogne."

> "In one another's arms they died,
> As babes wanting relief;
> No burial these pretty babes
> Of any man receives,
> Till robin red-breast painfully
> Did cover them with leaves."

Stern companion, the Croix Pucelle, a tall stone monument, standing, like a phantom, at the intersection of four narrow paths in the forest of St. Germain, to commemorate the murder of a little maiden on that spot about a hundred years ago, can attest that the nursery rhymes are not altogether so misplaced here as your looks would lead one to suppose. The forest walks are dark, and sometimes gory; and many unfrequented plots there are fitted for crime. The woods are ruthless, dreadful, deaf, and dull. At all events the children's song is not more fearful to their imagination than the records of facts ought to prove to the solemn historian. He beholds St. Leger, blinded and captive, dragged as a prisoner of war into Champagne, led into a deep forest, and abandoned there in the agony of a recent torture, without food, without a guide. He discovers him there some time after still alive; he hears of the impious Ebroin ordering

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* Plin. Nat. Hist. xii.

him again to be led into a still deeper forest, and thrown there into some cavern, where his body might be concealed under earth and stones; and of Count Robert fulfilling the order, leading him into the forest of Sarcing, in Artois, where, after long wandering, the murderers slew him. The criminals, too, are met with in such scenes, led thither by different motives. Eric, the second Lutheran king of Sweden, his conscience being troubled by the memory of those whom he had slain, used to seek refuge from it in the depth of forests, though the rage for blood followed him even to that solitude; for wandering thus, shortly after the murder of the innocent Stures, in a forest of the province of Sudermanie, and one of the instructors of his youth, a man aged about fifty-six years, presenting himself and trying to console him, giving him the paternal counsel to put to death no more of his subjects, while he was speaking the king exclaimed, "And thou, also, wouldst betray me," directing, the next moment, that he should be led to execution *. The Duke of Burgundy might have been found wandering, for a similar reason, in the gloomy wood. "Haunted by the remembrance of Jean Petit, and of his own former crime, uneasy about the judgment of the council, under pretence of hunting he drew near Constance," says the historian, "and took up his lodging under a tent in the forest of Argilly, in order to hear the stags by night."

The track before us descends into a vale, verifying the truth of what has just been said, that often the aspect of nature presents an analogy with views of the spiritual world; for, as St. Isidore observes, "ad virtutes difficile consurgimus, ad vitia sine labore delabimur †." "The approach to evil, which is easily taught," as Sophocles says, is guarded by no insurmountable barrier of rocks. "The road which leads to what one desires is a smooth gentle declivity, and the majority of men desire evil, deceived by their ignorance of good ‡." Pity, not anger, will become observers here; and indeed the forest itself can sympathize with those who thus lose themselves, since its trees and plants have experience of corruption and death. In the language of religion good men are compared to good trees, and evil men to evil trees; and to find the latter we have not to proceed far now. The prophet compares the crowd upon these roads to the leaves: "We are all fallen like the leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have carried us away §." The forest, as we shall see farther on, has its withered, dry, blasted, dead, fruitless trees. Pliny speaks of some that do not ever bear seed, such as the

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* Theiner, La Suède et le Saint Siège, i. 397.

† De Sum. Bon. lib. ii. 36.

‡ Plut. Vit. Artaxerx.

§ Isa. lxiv. 6.

alaternus, leaved like the ilex and olive, and of others that are found growing on rocks. "Infelices autem existimantur," he says, "damnatæque religione, quæ neque seruntur unquam neque fructum ferunt [*]." There is a noxious weed called charlock, which grows spontaneously wherever earth exists. Let ground be freshly turned up where no seed can ever have been deposited, and there, too, it will grow, like the moral evil in our human nature. The forest has its pestilential plants, such as the hollow fungous haliphlœus; whose bitter fruits no animal will touch but swine, and which, though so near the ground, is often struck by lightning, for which reason, he says, "its wood is never used in sacrifice [†]." There is the darnel, too, growing high, incultis amica [‡]. There are certain plants, he says, in Africa, that seem to be corrupted in their very birth by the sands from which they spring [§]. Human life, in all these respects, is full of analogies that bring us to the forest thus. "The world," says St. Bridget, "is a forest, and a desert abounding in ferocious animals, that is, in men without law, without charity, and without a sense of God, ready for all evils [||]." As the Benedictines say, "Qui in mundo in silvâ est, aut capit aut capitur [¶]."

——— "Now I begin
To tread an endless trace; withouten guyde
Or good direction how to enter in
Or how to issue forth in waies untryde,
In perils strange, in labours long and wide."

"The world," says St. Bridget, "is like a vast solitude, through which there is a road twixt the dangerous defiles of will and judgment, that leads to a great abyss." It is a long winding road; for, as Cardinal Bona says, "the soul describes a circle—contemplando sensibilia, et ex his ad seipsam perveniendo [**]." "Unnumbered errors surround human minds," says the Pythagorean bard,—

——— Ἀμφὶ δ' ἀνθρώ-
πων φρεσὶν ἀμπλακίαι
ἀναρίθματοι κρέμανται [††].

Yet we shall still find that there are numerous issues through which men can always pass to truth. "Rectos cursus fac pedibus tuis," saith the divine voice, "et vias tuas dirige ne declines

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[*] Nat. Hist. lib. xv. 45.
[†] Id. xvi. 9.
[‡] Id. 8.
[§] Id. xii. 49.
[||] Revelat. lib. viii. c. 18.
[¶] Hæsten. Œconomicæ Monast. lib. ix. c. 4.
[**] Card. Bona, Via Compendii ad Deum, 105.
[††] Pind. Ol. 7.

Aught pleasing prompts her, soon as she is wak'd
By pleasure into act. Of substance true
Your apprehension forms its counterfeit;
And, in you the ideal shape presenting,
Attracts the soul's regard—
Then, as the fire points up, and mounting seeks
His birth-place and his lasting seat, e'en thus
Enters the captive soul into desire,
Which is a spiritual motion, that ne'er rests
Before enjoyment of the thing it loves *."

Then Catholicism is met, proclaiming the necessity of directing well this impulse, shewing, as Henry Suso says, "quam sit fallax mundi amor; et quam sit amabilis Deus †." "Deceitful," it says in the words of St. Augustin, "is the worldly life—initium sine prudentia, et finis cum pœnitentia. So it is ‡." Life, it assures them, is a state of trial; it proclaims that there are some paths dangerous, often fatal; others safe and beatific; and that, as Dante says, "while one places the cause in heaven, and one on earth below, they are free to choose between them." Now the conscience of men responds affirmatively to this voice, and denies within them first the doctrine of fate. "The freedom with which we act," Epicurus used to say, "may be violated by my tyranny. We are guilty when we do evil." We remain, as Dante again says,—

"Free, not constrain'd by that which forms in us
The reasoning mind uninfluenced of the stars §."

The world, indeed, exclaims—

"But who can scape what his own fate hath wrought,
The worke of Heaven's will surpasseth humaine thought."

And statists, with their tables, will talk of laws which seem to determine the evil and the good of men independent of their will, while the holy Church replies, with Dante,—

——— "Ye who live
Do so each cause refer to Heav'n above,
E'en as its motion, of necessity,
Drew with it all that moves. If this were so,
Free choice in you were none; nor justice would
There should be joy for virtue, woe for ill."

Then might, indeed, the way of sin be left without a signal to direct intelligences which would be impotent to follow truth—

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* Purg. 18. † Dialog. c. 6. ‡ Epist. lxxxii. § Purg. 16.

"But when we put this vain deceit aside,
And see him gifted with a power to will,
And act upon his will; view him apart
From these imaginable obstacles,
Arm'd with a conscience, which himself may wield
Or fling aside, thus having in himself
And in his grasp the issue of his being,
Then truly man is awful."

The way which leads human nature back to heaven, its true country, is no other, says the Catholic Church, in the words of St. Gregory Nyssen, "than the flight and avoidance of earthly vices *;" and these are the result of a free will and a deliberate intention. It is a rule of jurisprudents—omne quod improbum est, solere accipi ut improbo consilio factum; and hence the proverb, ab impio progredietur impietas; men, therefore, are free to choose, and they are assured that the end of the ways opposed to the manners inculcated by Catholicity is misery and death. "These ways," says Catholicity, in the words of St. Bruno, "are forbidden, the others are good. The former, being the ways that wind round to Herod, are evil. Let us avoid those roads—Hæc via non ducit nos ad patriam. Herod is sin. Every road which leads to it is evil. Let us follow other roads which lead us to our country without error. All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. These two are sufficient to us; but the two are one, for the Lord is the way. All ways meet in that. No other way leads to the Father or our country. Let us keep that road, that joyful and safe we may arrive in our ancient country †."

Now that decay, corruption, and death are, in fact, as the Catholic religion teaches, awaiting those who obstinately pursue certain ways, from which it unchangeably warns the human race, is another lesson, of which the truth and justice are proclaimed by the natural sense of man and by his experience. It can be inferred from the analogy presented by the natural forest. For, as Butler observes, "of the numerous seeds of trees, of plants, vegetables, and bodies of animals which are adapted and put in the way to improve to such a point or state of natural maturity and perfection, we do not see, perhaps, that one in a million actually does; for the greatest part of them decay before they are improved to it, and appear to be absolutely destroyed; yet no one, who does not deny all final causes, will deny that those seeds and bodies which do attain to that point of maturity and perfection, answer the end for which they were really designed by nature, and therefore, that nature designed them for such perfection. And I cannot forbear adding," he says, "that the

* Orat. ii. de Oratione Dom.

† S. Brun. in Epiphan.

appearance of such an amazing waste in nature, with respect to these seeds and bodies, by foreign causes, is to us as unaccountable as, what is much more terrible, the present and future ruin of so many moral agents by themselves, that is, by vice. It is in vain, then, to object against the credibility of the present life's being a state of moral discipline for another, that all the trouble and danger might have been saved us by our being made at once the creatures and characters which we were to be; for we experience that what we were to be was to be the effect of what we would do; and that the general conduct of nature is not to save us trouble or danger, but to make us capable of going through them, and to put it upon us to do so. The alternative is left to our choice, either to improve ourselves and better our condition, or, in default of such improvement, to remain deficient and wretched. It is, therefore, perfectly credible, from the analogy of nature, that the same may be our case with respect to the happiness of a future state, and the qualifications necessary for it." But is the world, indeed, even so forlorn of good as these views now imply, and does it so swarm with every evil? It is an unerring voice which proclaims it.—"Totus in maligno positus est." It is experience which attests it. These roads are well frequented. As Salvien said in his time, "surgunt recentia crimina, nec repudiantur antiqua*;" and it would be well for a Christian people if the names of the evil were fewer than those of the good, or equal to them †. Suso, in his work on the nine rocks, describes the vision in which he saw how souls created by God for the greatest part are turned from God, falling by vice to destruction, so that few return to God who is their origin. He beheld, he says, a lofty mountain, on the top of which was a deep clear lake, in which he saw many fish. Vast waves dashed themselves at the feet of the mountain, rising to the very top of it, and then falling through precipitous rocks into the profound valleys round it; so that many of the fish, falling with the water, were broken against the rocks, and others, escaping into the rivers below, were taken in nets. In this manner, before reaching the feet of the mountain, most of them were captured, though all endeavoured to work their way back to their native lake on the summit, leaping upwards from rock to rock, having to ascend nine successive ledges, so that few reached the highest, where they rejoined their origin, which lake signified God ‡. Life, without the Catholic faith, seems a restless struggle to satisfy a cupidity which is insatiable—

——— "Who would deem, that scent
Of water and an apple could have proved

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* De Guber. Dei, lib. iv. c. 7.

† Id. vi. 1.

‡ De IX Rupibus.

Powerful to generate such pining want,
Not knowing how it wrought*?"

Men turn aside from the mystic city on the hill, which no one can avoid seeing, while words like those of Beatrice are heard to issue from it :—

"When my desire invited thee to love
The good, which sets a bound to our aspirings,
What bar of thwarting foss or linked chain
Did meet thee, that thou shouldst quit the hope
Of further progress? or what bait of ease,
Or promise of allurement, led thee on
Elsewhere†?"

"Eve sinned through ignorance," says St. Isidore; "man with deliberation‡." Our wanderings indicate the twofold origin; committing sin as we do, either, as he says, through cupidity, wishing to gain some object of desire, or through fear, seeking to avoid what we dread. Foresters tell us that the box-tree is secure from corrosive insects, and that the cypress is also free from them, in consequence of its bitterness§. The wood of the chestnut, however old, is found to exclude insects, and when used in constructions to be exempt even from spiders' webs. In the moral forest no analogous exceptions can be found. All are liable to contain an evil guest within them. "We have evil cupidity," says St. Augustin, "an internal enemy: and who is innocent before God? who would not wish to do what is forbidden if the fear of the penalty were removed? But with this mind, as far as in him lies, a man would rather there was no such thing as justice to prohibit sins; and who can doubt but that, if he could, he would take it away? He is therefore an enemy of justice. To be its friend, he must refuse to sin through a love of justice; for he who fears the punishment does not fear to sin but to burn; to fear sin he must hate sin itself as hell‖." We are confronted with a common danger, comrade, your guide at present equally with yourself. Let us join hands with every humble wanderer, recognizing the great bond of a like nature, and proceed with love and trembling to support each other. In this forest men are captured while they think they capture; they take, without seeing their defilement, the cross bye-paths, haunted by that vice which slew Uriah, cursed Reuben, seduced Samson, perverted Solomon. "Love," says Antonio de Guevara, "is such a dangerous animal that it lets itself be taken with a net of thread; and then the blow of a lance won't drive it off."

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* Purg. 23.
† Id. 31.
‡ De Summo Bono, ii. 17.
§ Plin. xvi. 80.
‖ Ep. cxliv.

Yet again, to use the words of Beatrice representing theologic truth, " had thy love been as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds." These forest roads, like the rocks of the Syrens, are strewed with many bones—multorum ossibus albos.

> " Omne adeo genus in terris hominumque, ferarumque
> In furias ignemque ruunt : amor omnibus idem.
> —— tum sævus aper, tum pessima tigris.
> Quid juvenis, magnum cui versat in ossibus ignem
> Durus amor [*] ?"

Dante, amidst purgatorial flames, meets one who cries,—

> " I am the Syren, she whom mariners
> On the wide sea are wilder'd when they hear,
> Such fulness of delight the listener feels [†]."

The object is ever the same—

> *Αἰεὶ δὲ μαλακοῖσι καὶ αἱμυλίοισι λόγοισι*
> *Θέλγει, ὅπως Ἰθάκης ἐπιλήσεται* [‡].

Thus some turn aside to seek,

> " Where pleasure dwelles in sensuall delights
> 'Mongst thousand dangers and ten thousand magick mights."

Hate hard by lust draws others more perversely still aside. " Farthest from God is best," says the lost archangel, whose liege men now throng many roads—

> " So fixedly upon the sun his eyes
> He fastens, makes on his left the central point
> To which he moves, and turns the right aside."

Then we meet one like Gaufrid de Magnaville, in the reign of King Stephen, " supra modum sapiens ut faceret malum [§], one that apprehends death no more dreadfully but as a drunken sleep, careless, reckless, and fearless of what is past, present, or to come ; insensible to mortality, and desperately mortal ;"—one whose blood is then so madly hot that no discourse of reason can gratify the same. " Quibusdam," says Pliny, " perpetua febris est, ut C. Mæcenati [||]." As of pleasure and of hate, so of gold, there is the fever which impels men on these roads.

> " Effodiuntur opes, irritamenta malorum
> —— fugêre pudor, verumque, fidesque ;
> In quorum subiere locum, fraudesque, dolique
> Insidiæ, et vis ; et amor sceleratus habendi [¶]."

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[*] iii. 245. [†] P. 9. [‡] i. 56.
[§] Guil. Neub. Rer. Anglic. 1. [||] H. N. vii. 52. [¶] i. 6.

"Here may be met the discontented gentleman,
Whose humble means match not his haughty mind.
Gold were as good as twenty orators,
And will no doubt tempt him to any thing."

In fine, all forms of moral evil can be found on the dark roads which here branch off. Sin will pluck on sin:—

"In scelus addendum scelus est, in funera funus,
Per coacervatos pereat domus impia luctus*."

"Every sin," says St. Odo, of Cluny, "which is not cancelled by penance, is either sin and the cause of sin, or sin and the penalty of sin; for sin, thus unannealed, by its own weight draws on another sin, and then another still, and so the mind becomes darkened; and thus sin is not only the cause, but, by its multiplication, the penalty of sin†." At length the whole multitude adapts its manners, its religion, its morals, and its philosophy to the time. As if plague-stricken—

"Indulgent animis; et nulla, quid utile, cura est;
Utile enim nihil est——‡."

There is a new decalogue propounded in the secret depths of such society:—

"Do villany, do, since you profess to do 't,
Like workmen ——— Away,
Rob one another ——
All that you meet are thieves —
Break open shops; nothing can you steal
But thieves do lose it."

Such is the progress on this road of the tree of evil, signifying vice in general. All men are tempted to take some steps along it. The most perfect are aware that there are none of its deceits, however horrible, that may not take themselves captive. "The humble question of the disciples, 'Numquid ego sum, Domine?' shows," says the Père de Ligny, "that they had already profited in the school of the Saviour. A novice would have said, 'It is not I,—I can never be capable of such an act.' A saint discerns better than ordinary men on what a little matter it turns that he become not a great sinner and a criminal." He repeats with fervour the secret prayer of the church, saying, "Nutantia corda tu dirigas§." "Abbot Philip de Otterburg," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "related to our abbot, that one of his novices was so tempted that no one could console him, and he formed a resolution of leaving the monastery the next day. That night he seemed in a dream to

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* viii. 12.
† S. Odo, Abb. Clun. Mor. in Job. lib. xxv.
‡ vii. 14.
§ V. Sund. after Epiph.

stand before the gate, from which two roads diverged, both leading to the wood opposite; and, while he doubted which to choose, he saw an old man, whom he asked which was the best road, who replied, 'This way to the right becomes, in the wood, soon thorny, unequal, and full of mud, but it leads to a delightful meadow full of flowers; the other, to the left, is dry and wide enough through the wood, but it leads to a vast, stony, and dismal plain. Choose which you will.' The novice awoke, and from that hour the temptation left him. The wood signified both lives, both of them short, the plains Paradise, or the land of everlasting horror *."

Having now sufficiently observed how thronged is the inauspicious road of the tree of evil, let us proceed to point out in detail the signals to the centre, with which are furnished those who follow it. We have already pointed at the warning given by Catholicity, as constituting one of these; those more direct must now be noticed. In the first place, the very deformity of the whole region may be said to supply a very impressive monitor. The philosophy of the world, as if moved by our first mother's query—How are we happy, still in fear of harm? attempts to change the scenery of this desert, and to render it even beautiful. Conscience is explained away, duty explained away, sin explained away, morality and immorality are explained away. If you will hear it, all turn out to be shams and chimeras. This is the new theory of morals; the new school of nominalists. To eliminate moral evil by denying its existence is the object, and so men proceed to eliminate the moral evil of theft, murder, rebellion, and lust. If this could really be effected, the shades of this road would supply at last the shelter which some of human kind desire; but a voice is heard exclaiming every instant, "I tell thee, fellow, there are none want eyes to direct them the way you are going, but such as wink and will not use them." The forest itself proclaims the falsehood of such expectations. The trees and their marvellous organization can indicate that Catholicity contains the true moral law of the Creator. For with them, too, there are mysterious ends to accomplish, by means which cannot be violated, since they have not free will to disobey. Surely here is a signal: for, as Alanus Magnus represents Nature demanding, in his book entitled her Complaint, "Are the trees less beautiful because they conform to their laws? Are their young blossoms and maturer fruits less delightful because there are limits appointed in this exercise of their properties which they do not transgress when the *δενδρῶτις ὥρα* that the poet sings of is accomplished? Why should it seem fair in man alone to know of no restraint?"

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* Lib. iv. 53.

"Solus homo moderationis citharam aspernatur et sub delirantis Orphei lyra delirat*." "It is true," as St. Thomas of Villanova says, "every temptation is a certain dark cloud, spread over the eyes of the heart, obscuring the light of reason, until dissolved by truth it changes into placid serenity, as when the sun's rays dissipate the vapours of a morning sky†." "What directs the faithful renders others more obstinate," says Pierre Mathieu, "as one and the same sun melts wax and hardens mire." "A man of ruined nature," as Frederick Schlegel observes, "sneers at the very name of beauty; the faintest allusion to art, nature, or love, begets in him a sensation of dread and uneasiness, like the grave mention of a spectre." The day on which Atreus, grandfather of Agamemnon, took his cruel revenge, the sun was said to give no light. "Non sunt tales tenebræ noctis," says St. Peter Chrysologus, "quales illæ sunt, quæ de confusione veniunt peccatorum; audi prophetam dicentem, comprehenderunt me iniquitates, et non potui ut viderem." Nevertheless, there is still a voice in the human conscience which renders a total ignorance of the truth of the Catholic view of sin impossible. After all, this theological is the same view as that which the poor all over the world, by a sort of natural instinct, evidently take of it. Mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, can imagine no other; and therefore Alanus Magnus represents Genius concluding her complaint of man's general prevarications with a form of words borrowed from judicial sentences, saying, "By the authority of superessential custom, and of its eternal idea, with the assent of the celestial host, with the suffrage of nature, and the ministry of other virtues, let every one who transgresses the moral law be separated, as the guilt of his ingratitude requires, from the kiss of supernal love, degraded from the grace of nature, and cut off from the uniform order of natural things‡." Men seeking to be led wrong are obliged to cultivate with difficulty a hatred against the morality of the Catholic Church. This they do, as St. Bruno says, "Se in hoc laudabiles putant si laudandos infamaverunt, quibus obedientia et omnis disciplina odio est§." But man, however constant in the train of Satan, like him, can say,—

——— "I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire
What I see excellent in good, or fair
Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense."

At sight of any of the radiant figures that proceed from the

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* De Planctu Naturæ.

† Dom. 1. Quad.

‡ De Planctu Naturæ.

§ Epist. ii.

centre in Catholicity, the worst man often is seen to stand like Satan at the sight of Eve:—

> ———"The Evil One abstracted stood
> From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
> Stupidly good."

How many men might be represented in the character of Pilate, as Aretin was painted by Titian in his Ecce Homo, which is at Vienna; his judgment pointing one way, his feet taking another? St. Isidore says that men for the most part commit, but do not love sin; "graviusque interdum qui diligit et non facit quam qui facit et odit*." Sophists may attempt to eliminate sin, but conscience will generally prove too strong for them. If the ministry of the angels of peace be rejected, there are other spirits that will point to truth, and compel men to behold it. There are still such divinities as the poets talk of, "the Furies, whose thoughts and designs are deep, βυσσόφρων Ἐρινύς†, whose power time reveals." "Remorse is strong," says Æschylus:

> σπλάγχνα δ' οὔτι ματάζει,
> πρὸς ἐνδίκοις φρεσὶν τελεσφόροις,
> δίναις κυκλούμενον κέαρ‡.

The urging of that word judgment, says one of the murderers in the Tower, "hath bred a kind of remorse in me." He is not afraid to kill Clarence, having a warrant for it, but to be damned for killing him, from the which he feels no warrant can defend him. He hopes this holy humour of his will change; it was wont to hold him but while one could tell twenty. He says his conscience flies into the Duke of Gloucester's purse. He is strong-framed, he adds; conscience, though a dangerous thing, cannot prevail with him. He respects his reputation as a tall fellow. "Relent! 'tis cowardly and womanish;" ay, but not to relent, says his intended victim, "is beastly, savage, devilish." He knows that it is so. St. Augustin, who knew well what were the sophisms of the passions, says that "there is no wicked man who in his conscience does not blush for his own wickedness§." Alanus Magnus knew them equally well when he wrote, for every sinner to repeat, the lines,—

> "Sus de sorde levat, saltem dum colligit escas,
> Cur nunquam surgit sorde volutus homo?"

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* De Sum. Bon. lib. ii. 21.

† Choëph. 650.

‡ Agam. 995.

§ Ps. xxiv.

The dialogue between the Palmer and Biorn in Sintram passes by means of an interior monitor in all who resemble him:

"The flow'ret was mine own, mine own;
But I have lost its fragrance rare,
And knightly name, and freedom fair,
Through sin, through sin alone."

"The flow'ret was thine own, thine own;
Why cast away what thou didst win?
Then knight no more, but slave of sin,
Thou 'rt fearfully alone."

The forest contains many memorials of such remorse; crosses, votive chapels, monasteries, and churches can attest its passage. "Tradition relates," says Mathieu Paris, "that the Countess Jane of Flanders, in memory of the execution of her father, Baldwin, emperor of Constantinople, which weighed upon her conscience, built a hospital, on the windows of which a wheel was painted [*]." "The wickedness of the perverse," says St. Isidore, "often conduces to the utility of the just, teaching them to have malice in horror, and impelling them to seek heaven [†]." Would you experience a new and most lively perception of the truth of what Catholicism lays down respecting the moral government? Repair to the profligate when their disguise is thrown aside; repair to what St. Fructuosus calls the "Conventus Malorum," the prison [‡]. In some places, indeed, as in Spain, it was not till of late years, as the influence of Catholicism declined, that the practice of building edifices, expressly intended and suited for the incarceration of culprits, came at all into vogue; but at present there are few localities deprived of such schools for our instruction, where we can best judge between Catholicity and the eliminators of sin, who would deny its truth? "There are two modes of crime," says the ancient philosopher, "by force and by fraud; fraud seems to belong to the fox, force to the lion, utrumque homine alienissimum, though of the two fraud is the most hateful [§]." But if vice be, as he says, most contrary to man's nature, there can be no denying that it is most constant in afflicting it. Corruption is derived from con rumpere, a breaking together, a dissolution. "O good Jesus," cries Antonio de Guevara, "I am the Samaritan left by the thieves half-dead upon the way-side—alive in understanding, and dead in will; alive in body, and dead in soul; alive in lying, and dead in truth; alive in all mischief, and dead in all goodness; alive to offend, and dead to serve thee [‖]." There is no rhetorical exag-

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[*] Ad ann. 1225.

[†] De Sum. Bon. iii. 61.

[‡] Ant. de Yepes, Chron. ord. S. Ben. ii. 211.

[§] Cicero de Off. i. 13.

[‖] The Myst. of Mt. Calv.

geration in such statements. It is a most prosaic reality, though expressed in verse, that the soul grows clotted by contagion, imbodies and imbrutes, till she quite lose the divine property of her first being. Pliny, speaking of the corrupt manners of Rome, uses the very image employed by Catholicism to express the state of sin: "Ergo hercules, voluptas vivere cæpit, vita ipsa desiit[*]." If you ask which are most numerous, the living or the dead, one should answer, like Anacharsis, with another question, Among which do you class the profane? "Truly, it is well said," remarks St. Anthony of Padua, commenting on the Gospel, "that there was a great crowd following the dead man; for not without a long procession does the devil wish the sinner to be carried to his grave; and therefore he arranges his procession like another, 'in this manner,' as Bernardine says, 'Ambition carries the cross, Detraction the incense, Oppression the holy, or rather the cursed, water; Hypocrisy bears the lights.' There are two chanters—one is the fallacious confidence of living long, and he sings, 'Requiem æternam. Des tibi requiem quia adhuc restat de tempore—you have still abundant time.' The other is presumption of the divine mercy, and he sings, 'In Paradisum te ducant angeli.' Pride celebrates the office. Then follow Vain-glory on the right, Envy on the left; and, walking after, Anger, Impatience, Insolence, Blasphemy, Contumely, Arrogance, Boasting, Injury, Idle-speech, Lasciviousness, Gluttony, Curiosity, and Restlessness. Lo! what a crowd in the conscience following him who is dead in sin[†]." In Alexandria there was an association like that of certain clubs in modern times, under the title of the Amimetobii—of the inimitables. "This is the vein which makes flesh a deity; God amend us!" adds the poet, "we are much out o' the way." This is the road of the old man which leads to Herod, not that of the new which leads to our country. "It is horrible," says St. Paulinus, "to rejoice in evil and in sin—nec ullum quodlibet scelus coram Deo tam abominabile sit, quam præterita peccata unicuique nostrum reminiscendo gaudere et inde exultare atque in eis semper jacere[‡]." Catholicism knows of men who sin, and who, in the secret depth of their souls, perceive their guilt, their ingratitude, their frailty: its antagonist, be the form what it may, is conversant with men who sin, and who excuse, defend, justify, and even sometimes glorify their disobedience. What act more execrably vile, profane, than to deny the bond of moral obligations? Yet this is what fills the ranks of those who would abolish Catholicity, and substitute for it the worship of lust and violence. This is what characterizes the democratic man of Plato—the tyrant

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[*] N. H. xiv. 2.

[†] S. Ant. de Pad. Serm. Fer. v. Hebd. iv. in Quad.

[‡] S. P. Pat. Aquil. lib. ad Henric. 10.

of Plato, a prey to his passions, resembling a state abandoned to the fury of a ferocious populace, all violences, all crimes which distract a city, agitating this corrupted soul. The man and the state act precisely in the same manner. Once formed, tyrannic love and passion require pleasures of all sorts—play, banqueting, debauchery; day and night within them rise up a crowd of indomitable and insatiable desires. Hence boundless dissipation and endless expense, prompted by the tumultuous cries of that crowd of desires which agitate the soul as if in their nest. So there, when all regular supplies are exhausted, recourse must be had to robbery and the plunder of temples*. Yet then, perhaps, the public mind will be resolved on what it calls peace.

"Vox est blanda quies, pax delectabile nomen;
Plura tamen de pace fluent opprobria, damna,
Dedecora, ærumnæ, quam de crudelibus armis.
Degenerabit enim virtus antiqua, voluptas
Inter opes et delicias delumbia reddet
Corpora, et amittet mens enervata vigorem.
O studia, O mores, O tempora sordida! cerno
Oblitos Christum populos; incredula corda
Conculcare fidem; scelus omne incurrere, facto
Agmine certatim, fierique animantia bruta†."

The ancients could discern the alliance between licentious pleasure and cruelty, as in the example of Ptolemæus Physcon. "Every voluptuous prince," says an old Catholic historian, "is cruel if there be occasion‡." If Catholicism condemns the licentious pleasure which the world deems allowable, experience proves that such a life is synonymous with a letting loose of those passions which Socrates compares to many-headed monsters dwelling within man§. Plutarch, speaking of the Triumvirs sacrificing their friends and relations, says, "This absence of all humanity proves that there is no ferocious animal more cruel than man, when he has power to satisfy his passion‖." And Frederick Schlegel says that "man, if without the gifts of revelation, would occupy a place with other animals, perhaps the most intrinsically wild and savage of them all." If life be a woody labyrinth, all-seeing Heaven, what a forest is this! All that we once read about in old romance, of the man changing into fox or wolf seems real here. Sin has so low degraded him, that the poet says,—

"I think he be transformed into a beast; for
I can no where find him like a man."

Reynard and Isegrim, Bruin and Reynardine should be his name.

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* Plato de Repub. viii. 96.

† Bapt. Mant. lib. ii.

‡ Pierre Mathieu, Hist. de Hen. IV. i.

§ De Repub. ix.

‖ In Vit. Cic.

"In passing through a thicket," says a traveller in Spain, "my horse made a dead halt, exhibiting unequivocal signs of alarm. This pause was followed by a loud rustling among the leaves; and immediately my muleteer cried out that a wild boar had passed by him in the most tangled part of the cover." There are men, whose presence in such a spot might easily affright him more. "In one and the same human nature," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "if you observe the various conditions of men, you will find a brute, a demon, and an angel; and not this only, but also various kinds of beasts. You will find every where the man-lion, the man-wolf, the man-ape, the man-elephant, the man-hog, besides vipers and serpents with a human face*." "The seven vices," says St. Bonaventura, "correspond to the seven beasts,—pride to a lion, envy to a dog, anger to a wolf, sloth to an ass, avarice to a hedgehog, gluttony to a bear, and luxury to a hog†." By the old administrative laws, only between the 1st of October and the 1st of February were swine suffered to enter forests to feed on acorns; but in this forest of life unclean animals are found at all seasons.

"Of the foul hideous forms with lynces eyes,
All these were lawless lustes and corrupt envyes,
And covetous aspects, all cruel enimyes.

For by those ugly formes weren pourtrayed,
Foolish delights and fond abusions,
Which do that sence besiege with fond illusions."

In Greghetto's picture of Diogenes searching for a man among the crowd, we see only beasts—symbols of vices, irreligion, libertinage, avarice, gluttony, and sloth. The satyr asleep after drunkenness, in marble of Paros, which Winckelmann calls the Faune of the Palace Barberini, is, he says, "not a beautiful ideal, but a faithful image of simple nature abandoned to itself."

Thus, then, by its own deformity, does vice, on the road of the tree of evil, supply a signal to the central truth, towards which its victims sometimes fly, seeking instinctively, not the incantations of Zamolxid, but the harmonious chant of David's lyre to appease the brutal part of their own nature. True, by men without the pale of Catholicity attempts are made, as we have already remarked, to represent the fruits of this tree otherwise. There are books by men regarded as the kings of literature; one, for instance, entitled "Elective Affinities," in which pedantry contends with obscenity, where the most execrable vice that shocks the people is so regarded by refined men and women, that it gains for him who commits it the appellation of

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* De S. Dorothea, serm. ii.

† Compend. Theolog. Verit. lib. iii. 14.

"the Celestial Child;" but it is, perhaps, after the perusal of such German, French, or English works, that men can discern with greatest clearness what a privilege it is to have a Latin heart, resulting from the light of divine faith, and from the instruction that is given to every Catholic infant in its catechism. This little book is the true moly with which we may safely enter the house of Circe*, and it may be well to enter it thus, to mark how others can escape; "nihil enim nos prohibet," as St. John Climachus says, "à contrariis rebus virtutum petere exempla †." What St. Anthony of Padua says continues therefore to be true: "Every vice commends the virtue opposed to it. Anger proclaims the beauty of patience; gluttony, of temperance, and so on; so that, though vices are evil, they yet bear witness to the truth ‡." After passing this signal, we come immediately to an opening formed by the disgust and horror which the worst men often feel for their companions, for those who, as the old French historian quaintly says, "meurent et demeurent," die and remain with them §; whose "fondness is without benevolence, and whose familiarity is without friendship." Reckless of the old Catholic warnings conveyed in such lines as,—

"Quid mage præcipites avido nos invehit Orco ?
Hortatus, exempla, duces, sociique malorum,"—

they have sought experience like him of whom it was said,—

——— "Nor avail'd me aught
To sue for inspirations, with the which
I, both in dreams of night and otherwise,
Did call him back; of them so little reck'd him,
Such depth he fell, that all device was short
Of his preserving, save that he should view
The children of perdition ||."

Then will examples gross as earth exhort them to seek company of a different kind. Schiller's hero, awakening to a sense of his degradation, and addressing the worst of his associates, declares his resolution to leave him to climb to the summit of glory on the pillars of infamy. "In the shade of my ancestral groves," he says to him, "a nobler joy awaits me. I have written to my father to implore his forgiveness, and where there is sincerity there is compassion and help. Let us take leave of each other. After this day we shall meet no more." He has found an outlet through which many have escaped to join the great multitude that is gathered round the tree, not of evil, but of the cross,

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* Od. xiv.
† Scal. Par. xxvi.
‡ Serm. Fer. iii. Hebd. ii. in Quad.
§ Pierre Mathieu, Hist. de Hen. IV. lib. vi.
|| Purg. 30.

which, encompassing the Catholic church, has saved and restored the world. But another evil road misleads his steps; that which is ruined remains ruined; and in the Bohemian forests, bidding adieu to human sympathies, he braves a destiny which he renders unalterable for himself.

CHAPTER II.

THE ROAD OF THE DEVIL.

HERE is a blasted heath, encircled by huge basaltic rocks, betokening fire, projecting amidst a sombre wood, of which all the trees seem plague-stricken. Pine-forests have a dangerous enemy in a very small black-beetle, Bostrichus piniperda, which fixes itself in the marrow of the young top-shoots, and destroys the spire which is to rise into height. Sometimes whole forests exposed to the south are destroyed thus. The Epicea, or Pinus picea, has also a dreadful enemy in the black worm, which burrows in the cellular tissue of the bark, forms at length a circle round it, and so renders inevitable the death of the noble tree. The imprudent cutting down of sheltering trees, causing clear spaces in forests, has occasioned the invasion of these insects, brought by the wind, which multiply in a manner incredible. Thus does forest literature, as the Germans say, the forst litteratur, as well as forest scenery, present analogies with the phenomena we are about to witness in the dark perilous track which bears a name, with which no region of the earth, and no language ever spoken by man is unacquainted.

"It is very pernicious," says the first guide who offers his services upon this road, "to believe in devils. Fiends, devils, hell! do you know what you say? That pure malignity can exist is the extreme proposition of unbelief; it is atheism; it is the last profanation; it is gothic theology; it is vindictive theology." "La you, an you speak ill of the devil, how he takes it at heart!" Shakespeare's Maria would exclaim on hearing him. "Well, let her hold her peace here; this is not the way; it is well not to move him; no way but gentleness; gently, gently. We shall hear anon, that it is very vulgar and pernicious to believe that there is such a thing as truth or God, virtue or sin, rewards for innocence, or death awaiting those who eat of the forbidden fruit." Let us not breathe a word of dissent at present. In general, from the first steps we take along this path, silent observation is

best. Those we shall meet are rough, and will not be roughly used. Let us imitate Sintram, as represented by Albert Dürer. That knight, in full armour, of an elderly appearance, rode along on his tall steed, accompanied by his dog, through a dreadful valley, where rocky clefts and roots of trees twisted themselves into horrid shapes; while poisonous fungi grew from the earth, and noxious reptiles crawled about among them. Near him rode Death, on a lean, miserable horse; and behind, a demon-form reached forth its clawed arm after him; horse and dog looked strange and fearful, as if infected with the poisonous influence of the horrors around; but the knight rode on his way peaceably, carrying on his lance's point an already impaled lizard. In the distance, a castle, with its noble friendly battlements, looked down upon him, causing the awful solitariness of the valley to press still more heavily upon his soul. "There are no such things at all as devils!" Of course not; though the forest, as at Fontainebleau, may retain its faith in them, and proclaim it by such names as we meet wandering there; when we come to the Roche du Diable, and to the Ventes du Diable,—words which need not shame it, since even cities, by certain streets, are familiar with the same associations; while Mantua, so dear to poets, derives its very name from the Evil One, as expressed in the Etruscan tongue, one of the most ancient and venerable languages of which we have any knowledge. This age, it must be confessed, seems to be peculiarly favourable to men who are desirous of having no belief on this point in common either with the original founders of states, or with foresters and charcoal-burners at the present day, who in their leafy groves, where objects are blended and seen but indistinctly, can cherish with the most lively sense the sublime traditions of the human race; since, as poets, living in the broad daylight of the modern civilisation say, the present generation may be compared to rats crawling about the club of Hercules. A phthisicky professor, kept from fainting by a bottle of sal volatile, lectures on strength; and they who turn pale to see a bleeding goose, clap their hands with joy when they see their rival driven bankrupt from the exchange.

> "With much to excite, there's little to exalt;
>   Nothing that speaks to all men and all times;
> A sort of varnish over every fault;
>   A kind of common-place even in their crimes."

The stranger is not about to startle any traveller, by conjuring up fiends to a circle, to a mirror, to crystal, to the skulls of dead men, to a ring, to the hands, to a nail, to an image, to water, fire, or to any other medium of detested art. Here are no horned goats, or toads, or staffs anointed to scare the super-

stitious, and furnish a pretext for vainer sophists to vent their imagined wisdom, forgetting that, after all, as a great author says, "what appears contemptible to us may be only a mask to conceal appalling horrors." Remember that we only took this path with a view of showing that men can be induced to fly to the fortress through disrelish for the companions with which sin supplies them. Let us proceed then to observe who these may be, and whether our proposition can be supported by truth.

"On this road," says the author of Sintram, "a sense of solitariness presses upon the soul." How can this be reconciled with the company that we say attends those who follow it? A mystical but not less certain fact explains the difficulty. We read in the page of which no mortal sense can fathom all the wisdom—sanguinum virum. "It is man in the singular," says St. Bruno, commenting upon it, "not plurally, in order to show, in hoc quod mendaces sunt, unam massam esse. We read in the same Psalm, 'Inimicum' in the singular, and 'peribunt' in the plural, quia et una massa et multi sunt*." Again, we read that Pilate delivered Christ unto them that they should do with him according unto their will. "Why," asks Antonio de Guevara, "is it not said, according unto their wills, seeing that in a multitude there is a variety of opinions? The reason is," he replies, "that it is the property of the wicked, in all matters of sin and wickedness, to be always of one opinion, which privilege of theirs was kept in the death of Christ†." "Hoc cogitaverunt unanimiter. They will think," says St. Bruno, "with one evil will unanimously against Christ, and they make a covenant that they may destroy his tabernacles. These are the transitory and fallible multitude of the Idumeans, the earthly and blood-thirsty multitude of false Christians, who, though initiated in the ecclesiastical sacraments, are yet worldly, grasping in every manner after earthly things, and cruel against the good and true Ishmaelites—sibi obedientes in omnibus obscœnis voluntatibus suis; for Idumeans signify blood-thirsty, and Ishmaelites obedient to themselves‡." Nevertheless, though one and unanimous in this sense, they who take the road of vice in general form a company from which, from time to time, some few will contrive to slide off, moved by a desire of a different kind of brotherhood; for, in fine, as we have already observed, they have not lost all sense, and some will shudder at the thought of being always with those whom Antonio de Guevara styles parishioners of hell. There are no devils. Well, at all events, let us mark those whose visible presence no one can deny.

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* S. Brunon. Carthus. Exposit. in Ps. v. et ix.

† The Myst. of Mt. Calv. ‡ S. Brun. Expos. in Ps. lxxxiii.

"Vias impiorum non ingrediaris, neque zelaveris vias iniquorum. In quocunque loco castrametati fuerint, ne transeas illuc: verum declina ab eis et abscede*."

But we have entered on these ways, it will be said; we have desired them; we have passed by all these. It will not be alone the desert place that yields you ill counsel, nor will this wood lack worlds of company; yet on earth, not only in visible form will sinners cling to sinners, but there is an unseen associate, manifest by his operations, that will fasten on them, as in the scene of the abyss, which Dante so awfully describes:—

——————— "Ivy ne'er clasp'd
A doddered oak, as round the other's limbs
The hideous monster intertwined his own.
Then, as they both had been of burning wax,
Each melted into other, mingling hues,
That which was either now was seen no more.
Thus up the shrinking paper, ere it burns,
A brown tint glides, not turning yet to black,
And the clear white expires†."

What becomes of man once entered by free choice upon the fearful road which we are now treading? He denies the reality of the danger; he gives himself up to pleasure as to his god. "Pleasure," he cries, "shall reign supreme, and the Bacchanal dance so wildly beat the ground, that the dark kingdom of the shades below shall tremble at the uproar!" "In tales," as Trithemius says, "dæmonium habet potestatem." That man neglects and despises all ecclesiastical benedictions, and therefore can have no ordinary succour. Alanus de Insulis compares him to "one of the wild swine ranging through the forest, feeding on the trees of the wood, having for herdsman the fiend who leads his polluted mind through the region of corrupt desires‡." "Recedit à via doctrinæ, in cœtu gyggantium commorabitur—truly a bad residence and a false company," says Roulliard, "quoniam gyggantes non resurgent, cum dominus eos contriverit." As Alanus de Insulis demands,

"Advena sylvarum si bestia forte caninam,
 Incidat in turbam, nonne peribit ibi?
Quis, nisi sit serpens, serpentibus associatur,
 Cum graviter pungant id quod adhæret eis?
Marcescunt flores, et gramina mortificantur.
 Quæ solo tactu fusa venena cremant§."

"The Etruscan books," says Cicero, "have certain names which agree well with these men. They call Deteriores and Repulsos those quorum et mentes et res sunt perditæ longeque à communi

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* Prov. † Inf. 25. ‡ Euclid. super Cant. Canticorum, 2. § Lib. Parab.

salute disjunctæ. Therefore I say, Deteriores cavete; quorum quidem magna est natio*." So calls out the Catholic Church; but these men have not taken heed; and now they are with those they cannot love, without being able to escape from the fascination which binds them to their company. Schiller paints this state with the pencil of a master :—" Are you not ashamed to boast of these things?" cries Charles Von More to Spiegelberg. "A curse on you for reminding me of it! Man! man! false, perfidious crocodile-brood! your eyes are all tears, but your hearts steel! kisses on your lips, but daggers couched in your bosoms!" "Brother, you are not in earnest," replies the other robber; "tell me, sweet brother, what has brought you to this mood? Cheer up; don't play the child. Leave us! no, no, no! that cannot be! impossible, brother!

> "'Out of this wood do not desire to go:
> Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.'

True, he has sworn an iron oath never to forsake them; and he keeps it, surrounded by murderers, hemmed in by hissing vipers, riveted to vice with iron fetters, whirling headlong on the frail road of sin to the gulf of perdition, amid the blooming flowers of a glad world, a howling Abaddon!" "The greatest punishment," says Plato, "which crime draws after it consists in rendering us like the bad, *τὸ ὁμοιοῦσθαι τοῖς κακοῖς ἀνδράσιν*; and then, when made like the bad, causing us to fly from good men and good discourses, breaking off all intercourse with them, and seeking bad company, as it were, so as to stick to it inseparably †." There are men whose presence, even for a moment, on this road, causes the heart to shudder. What would it be to have them with us for ever! A moment suffices for Siegendorf when he sees the murderer in the Church. Hear him describe it :— "The Church was thronged, and as I looked down along the lines of lifted faces, from our bannered and escutcheoned gallery, I saw, like a flash of lightning (for I saw a moment and no more), what struck me sightless to all else—the Hungarian's face! I grew sick; and when I recovered from the mist which curled about my senses, and again looked down, I saw him not.

> "When we went forth, the joyous crowd,
> The decorated street, the long array,
> The clashing music, and the thundering
> Of far artillery—"

"The standards o'er me, and the tramplings round the roar of rushing thousands,—all—all could not chase the man from my

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[*] Orat. de Harusp. Resp.

[†] De Legibus, lib. v.

mind, although my senses no longer held him palpable." The thought of an eternal union with spirits, however vast, which want the true stamp of charity, carries with it no great consolation to creatures which cannot wholly be unmade. "There is another life," said Buonaparte to Duroc, mortally wounded fighting for him at Bautzen. "We shall see each other again." Did Duroc care much about seeing him again? It is Chateaubriand who asks the question.

"O thou! who to this residence of woe
Approachest, when he saw me coming cried
Minos,
Look how thou enter here, beware in whom
Thou place thy trust; let not the entrance broad
Deceive thee to thy harm [*]."

Dante's grave words thus cited, recalling faith, render impossible any further ironical compliances with the vain sophists who would pretend that this road derives its name from nothing real that exists in nature. "Revera," as St. Isidore says, "quem Deus deserit, dæmones suscipiunt [†]." They who deny it often furnish the best proof.

They have pass'd—
They outspeeded the blast;
While 'tis said, they are fled.
Whither, oh whither?
To the dark, to the past, to the dead.

Indeed, the subterfuges of some might lead us to infer that their scepticism was rather affected and laboured than sincere and involuntary. "Goethe," say they, "would view Satan in another form, saying, he shall be modern; he shall be European; he shall dress like a gentleman, and accept the manners and walk in the streets of Vienna and Heidelberg in 1820. So stripping him of horns, cloven foot, and tail, he looked for him in his own mind, in every shade of coldness, selfishness, and unbelief, that in crowds or in solitude darkens over the human thought, and found that the portrait gained reality and terror by every thing he added and by every thing he took away." We are not concerned with what he may have thought he added or took away; we have to speak of the existence of Satan as a fact, and of the opening which some men are enabled to rend for themselves to Catholicity by means of the fear and horror which the thought of such company inspires.

When we only survey the phenomena of human life, and

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[*] Inf. 5.

[†] De Sum. Bon. ii. 15.

institute no inquiry as to their causes, it may be very true that to find company sufficiently dreadful to effect the conversion of disgusted or affrighted hearts, we need demand no more than what men themselves can furnish. "Nam heu," exclaims St. Bonaventura, "multi diabolo similes sunt in culpa, et ideo similes erunt in Gehenna. Homo cuicunque similis es in mundo ei similis eris in cœlo vel in inferno*." There are men who can no longer feel the magnificence of nature and of the creation; who have lost the faculty of prayer, the trembling awe in presence of the Father and Creator of the world; who experience nothing when they hear the chants of the Church, the voice of the nightingale, poetry, or music—men who continue obdurate to the last,—

> ——————— "Like to the Pontic sea,
> Whose icy current, and compulsive course,
> Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
> To the Propontic and the Hellespont;
> Even so their bloody thought, with violent pace,
> Does ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love."

Trithemius, speaking of the fiends, exclaims, "Væ illis, qui in consortium illorum transierint, quoniam ad pœnitentiam veram raro convertuntur!" Cæsar of Heisterbach, to show the difficulty, relates an instance. "About two years ago," he says, "a certain citizen of Monasteria died, leaving his house and money to an only son, who squandered all in luxurious living, selling the house to his sister; and then, after spending the price, returning to her and trying to recover it by threats and justice; when, after failing in both, he assassinated her in the market-place; thence flying to the sanctuary in the Church of St. Paul, crying out to the clerks, 'Defend your liberties!' which they did. Then came men who tried to induce him to come out; but he refused, unless they promised that he should be pardoned. At last another came, saying, 'Come out, Bernard, come out; here is the best wine selling in such a tavern;' when he came out, and was betrayed and taken. Being asked why he left the church? He replied, 'The pavement seemed so to burn under my feet that I could not endure it.' Scholars came to him, to whom he said, that he saw the place full of demons; but no sign or word of penitence could they see or hear from him †." They who have their eternal jewel given to the common enemy of man are grown fearfully to resemble the worst idea we can form of evil. "Their first resemblance to the devil," says the Père de Ligny, "is in being murderers, in their desire of homicide; the second is their opposition to truth,

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* Serm. I. de XII. Apost.

† Lib. xi. c. 54.

their love of lying. The Jews said to each other, 'Whether will he kill himself, because he says, Whither I go you cannot come?'" "Foolish words! and void of any sense," remarks St. Anthony of Padua, adding, "as if they could not have followed him if he had spoken of his death. But it is to be observed, that 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' Therefore from having his blood and death constantly impressed on their hearts, from continually seeking how they might procure and accomplish his death, they could not speak of any thing else respecting him *."

In an ancient narrative ascribed to St. Athanasius, the question is asked, as no one had then died, how did Cain learn to kill Abel? To which it is answered, "The devil showed him in a dream in what way he could kill his brother." Be this as it may, the men with whom we consort here seem to have long had no need of a master in the art. Lacenaire and his troop are said to have assassinated men in Paris for the sole pleasure of killing scientifically; for the chief, at least, was skilled in all the learning of the university, an adept in anatomy, and almost in every branch of science. Why was not this spirit implanted in a tiger, which gluts its raging jaws with human flesh? So cries the Charles von Moor of Schiller; and the next moment he exclaims, "Who will teach me how to reach the heart's core, to crush, to annihilate my enemy? Such a man shall be my friend, my angel, my god—him will I worship!" Such a friend is not far distant; ay, in the temple, in the town, the field, he, as in the wood, will do thee mischief. "Similitudo voluntatum," says Trithemius, "homines malos et impios pares facit esse dæmonibus †." Alanus de Insulis had to refute the error of the Waldenses and Albigensians, who said that there are no other souls in human bodies but the apostate angels who fell from heaven ‡. He shows the vanity of such an opinion, which seems to indicate a singular state of consciousness in those who held it; but, without consenting to such an error, one must admit that there is sometimes a fearful similarity between men and devils. "As hunting dogs," says St. Bridget, "are first led in couples, and then, when trained, to capture and devour animals, are seen, in hastening after the prey, to outstrip their leaders, so man, trained and fascinated in sin, is more quick to sin than the devil is to tempt—Sic homo assuetus et fascinatus in peccato promptior est ad peccandum quam diabolus ad tentandum §. Whoever," she says, "has a wish to hurt his neigh-

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* Serm. Fer. ii. post dom. ii. in Quad.

† Octo Quaest. ad Maxim. Caesar.

‡ Alan. contra Waldens., &c. cap. 9.

§ Rev. S. Birg. lib. iv. c. 22.

bour, is like the devil, and is his member and instrument, and it would be an injustice to the devil to take his servant from him *." Calderon speaks of a certain robber as one of the devil's hermits, who has lived between two rocks, doing in his service rigorous penance. Such anchorites, who often become cœnobites, are not wanting where Protestantism and Rationalism have left no other in the woods. "In these days," says Marina d'Escobar, "I saw three persons in my room, who seemed at one time to be two men and one demon, and at another two demons and one man, all perpetrating wickedness. My guardian angel signified to me that this horrible spectacle was permitted in order to show me that some men are so possessed by the devil, that they sin with as much malice as if they were devils, while the devils make such use of some men, leaving them still their liberty, that their actions may seem wholly those of men. Thus there are men so wicked that the infernal spirit conceives no offence against God with greater malice than the human heart †." The fact is, that, as Savonarola says, "in proportion as any one departs from rectitude, which consists in obedience to the will of God, he takes a tortuous direction and approaches to the misery of the damned ‡." But methinks I hear it said, to justify the title of this road as yet we have seen nothing. Well, but wait awhile, I entreat you; for now, supposing even that we were to discard all theology, whether "Gothic, Roman, or Oriental," and merely to observe the facts and visible realities of life as they exist in all history and around us, how shall we find it possible to account for the phenomena presented on these roads, without ascribing them to the action of evil beyond what exists in human nature left wholly to itself? Wicked men act always with a view to their own interest; but it is not for the interest of men to take these crooked paths, pursuing them for ever, and they know it; for natural reason and the light of nature suffice to show their vanity, their dangers, and their misery. "I thought," says Goethe, "that I could detect in nature something which manifests itself only in contradictions, and which could not be comprehended under any idea or word. It was not godlike, for it seemed unreasonable; not human, for it had no understanding; not angelic, for it often betrayed a malicious pleasure." Why does he add not devilish? "because," he says, "it was beneficent." But how so? when he adds, "in the impossible alone did it appear to find pleasure, while it rejected the possible with contempt, and seemed to come in between all other principles to separate them and yet to link them. I gave it," he says,

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* Lib. v. sect. vi.

† Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, p. ii. lib. ii. c. 21.

‡ Savon. Expos. Orat. Dom.

" the name of demonic, seeking to screen myself from this fearful principle by taking refuge, according to my usual habits, in an imaginary creation. Although," he adds, " this demonical element can manifest itself in all corporeal and incorporeal things, and even expresses itself most distinctly in animals, yet, with man especially does it stand in a most wonderful connexion, forming in him a power which, if it be not opposed to the moral order of the world, nevertheless does so often cross it, that the one may be regarded as the warp and the other as the woof." Thus does he recognize a phenomenon of which he admits the ancients had a certain perception; and in effect, let us choose what name we will, the existence and influence of spiritual contradicting powers hostile to the virtue and happiness of men, but acting conjointly with their free will, are historically and experimentally established. Julian, in his book against the Christian religion, has frequent occasion to speak of demoniacs, but he never once raises an objection from the account given of them in the New Testament. Salvien, judging from what passes around him, says, " that the daily snares which innumerable legions of demons have devised are so contrived, that it is hardly possible for all minds to overcome them: for as an army, when the enemy is advancing, takes care to occupy the places through which he must pass, cutting ditches, and digging pitfalls, and fixing stakes, so that, though some may escape, many are sure to perish by their means; so also the demons have laid so many snares in this human life that they are sure to capture some souls of the human race *." " That invisible enemy," says Alanus de Insulis, " is sometimes a robber, when he rages with the force of a tyrannical prince; sometimes a thief, when he deceives by a heretic; now he is a bird, when he rises by pride; presently he becomes an asp, deceiving by luxury; then a lion, armed with open cruelty; then a dragon, lying in wait to devour †." Formerly all legal provisions for the stability of holy things recognized the reality of this dreadful power, as in the diploma of the Prince Jordanus, of Capua, to the Abbey of Mount Cassino, concluding with the words, " Quod si quis diabolico instinctu compulsus hanc nostram concessionis paginam violare præsumpserit," let him be treated so ‡. Formerly all praise of heroic virtue involved the consideration of a triumph over the same principle, as in the sequence in an old missal of Liege on St. Thomas of Canterbury—

" Jura servans, Deo servit;
Inde sævit et protervit

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* De Gubernat. Dei, lib. vi. 3.

† Summa de Arte Prædicat. c. 35.

‡ Ap. D. Gattula, Hist. Cassinens. vii. 401.

Hostis arte varia.
Nunc, ut vulpes fraudulenta,
Nunc ut tigris virulenta,
Tentat omnes aditus.
Nunc minatur, nunc blanditur;
Ille nihil emollitur,
Idem manens penitus *."

Only look around you, in this nineteenth century, and see how wonderfully the game is played by him who opposes God and his Church; what masterly moves are made to involve Catholicity and Catholics in danger, and judge whether some intelligence more than human must not be employed to bring things to this pass. "To be delighted, indeed, with perverse thoughts," says St. Isidore, "is the result of our own will; but to have them suggested is from the demon †."

"Who inspired thee with that thought?" says Schiller's captain to another of the gang. "Hark, fellow! that human soul of thine did not produce it. Who suggested it to thee? Yes, by the thousand arms of death! that's what we will, and what we must!" "It is only the devil," says a German author, "who knows neither measure, nor cadence, nor melody. He has a mouth which serves him for nothing but speech." True, to speak, to contradict, is his especial part, yet he can employ the taste for beauty, for music, for the responsive movement of the limbs. What is not now suggested to the human mind by some intelligence which it is difficult not to perceive is foreign, acting upon it through all corporeal and mental images! "Serpit hoc malum dæmonis," says St. Augustin, "per omnes aditus sensuales, dat se figuris, accommodat se coloribus, adhæret sonis, odoribus se subjicit, infunditque saporibus ‡." By the figure he attacks virtue, by the colour society, by the music obedience, by the taste temperance, while by the imagination, the understanding, and the will, he prompts man to forsake God. So, without searching for such marks in the greensward, as we are told are found in Warwickshire,—marks in the form of an immense mis-shapen human foot, destroying every trace of vegetation, as if the turf were scorched by a red-hot iron, the baneful influence now, after two years, remaining still, the deep indented marks being hard, dry, barren, as at first,—without being guided by any visible or imaginary traces of a mysterious wayfarer; without the aid of claviculæ Salomonis, or of the secrets of Hermes the Spaniard, which begins—Qui cum spiritibus loqui desiderat; or of Flos florum, or of Rubens, or Mahumeth, or of the book of Michael Scot, or of Peter of Apono the Paduan, or

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* Année Liturgique de Dom Guéranger.

† De Summo Bono, ii. 24.

‡ In lib. 83, quæst. 12.

of any other of the magic volumes mentioned by Trithemius[*], we find at last the demon personally, and must leave our boon companions taunting each other, as the villain reproaches the pilgrim in the old mystery, saying, " you would rather sit in the tavern than go to the moutier," since, as Dagobert used to say to his dogs, " there is no company so good but it must separate," and find ourselves, however dreadful may be the thought, alone in the forest, face to face with Satan. In solitude, the man intent on evil finds that he is not quite alone. Let all the doors be locked. Let eight chambers be made fast behind him, there, in the last secret cabinet, where human feet cannot come within some hundred steps of him, the evil guest is found seated, pointing, suggesting, calculating, dissuading, advising, promising, blandly persuading with his kisses, which, says Alanus Magnus, are manifold, all being unlike the kisses of Christ and of the Church[†].

I will not hold you nine hours, like Glendower, in reckoning up the several devil's names, but it will be well to hear of certain distinctions that from all antiquity have been transmitted. There is Asmodeus against patience; Beemoth, or the beast, against purity, because he renders men bestial; Belial, without a yoke, " than whom a spirit more lewd fell not from heaven, or more gross to love vice for itself," against obedience; Abadon, or exterminator, against pity; Diabolus, either, as St. Bonaventura and Molanus say, from seeking to make but two morsels of soul and body, or from being the accuser, against charity; Lucifer, against humility; Beelzebub, or man of flies, that is, of erring souls, against industry; Sathan, or adversary, being interpreted contrary to, opposition, against peace; Demon, that is, sanguine or knowing, against true wisdom by the wisdom of the world[‡]. There is Beelphegor, of anger; Astaroth, of sloth[§]; there is Mammon; there is, in fine, the Prince of this world, of whom Christ has said, " in me non habet quicquam." Philosophers, like Goethe, may desire to banish the ugly form of the demon, as the ugly of every kind, into the low sphere of the ridiculous; but how can such qualities exist under any other form but the hideous, the bestial, the terrible? and whatever may be your repugnance to share the fate of Spinello Aretino, who is said to have never recovered from the shock caused by his seeing in his sleep the figure of Lucifer, which he had himself painted, how can you comprise such things in the idea of sublimity or beauty?

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[*] Antipalus Maleficiorum, lib. i.

[†] Alan. serm. i.

[‡] Bucchius, Liber Aureus Conform. Vitæ P. Francisci ad vit. J. C. 252.

[§] De la Cerda de excel. Cœlest. Spirit. c. 5; S. Bonav. Compend. Theolog. Verit. lib. ii. 26.

Milton ascribes to all the demons generally certain virtues, and those who love that poet are offended at any representation of Satan which is not in accordance with the sublime; but herein they forsake the path of all ancient thought; for no traces of these virtues appear in the primitive or mediæval traditions respecting the enemy of the human race. These traditions are all equally opposed to the modern sentimentalists, who pretend to disprove the existence of pure malice. "To a demon," says Cæsarius, "that possessed a certain man, horribly distorting him, and pouring out endless words, a bystander said, 'Say, devil, if you could return to your former state of grace, what labour would you undertake for it?' and he replied, 'If I had the choice, I would rather descend with one deceived soul into hell than return to heaven;' and, when all wondered, he added, 'Why do you wonder? I cannot wish what is good*.'" To show that all, thus amerced of power to will good, desire to follow, to attach themselves to men, many ancient narratives are handed down, more or less singular, grotesque or profound; for the mixture of the gay and the horrible belongs to all such imagery as Michael Angelo well conceived when he represented pride, ambition, avarice, and luxury under attributes that seem as likely to excite scorn and laughter as horror. Robert d'Arbriselle, ascribing all the errors of men against faith, and their perversity, to the demon, begins by saying, "Vincendus est sessor diabolus, ut obtineatur equus à dæmone directus, quamvis excæcatus," as if the demon saw for it, and that had been sufficient †. Yes. to this hour, especially on a road we shall presently tread, called after hollow trees, ghastly dialogues are heard like that in Sintram, "'Do not clasp me so tight with thy long arms, they are so cold!' 'It cannot be helped, young man—it cannot be helped, for my long cold arms are not pressing yet on thy heart.' 'Do not breathe on me so with thy icy breath; all my strength is departing.' 'I must breathe, young man, I must breathe. But do not complain.'" Do you think that we have to search for such discourse in the romance of poets, or in the legends of monks? Visit prisons and the hulks, ay, enter even the solemn tribunals of justice, and you will find them in all the reality of confronting facts. Following our custom to cite ancient in preference to contemporaneous testimony, let us again hear Cæsar of Heisterbach. "The abbot of Nuinburg," says this old monk, "which is a rich abbey of a black order in Saxony, passing lately by us, related to us a fact respecting the cure of a possessed person. There is with us," said he, "a certain religious knight named Albert Scothart. He, before his conversion, was so strenuous in arms, so celebrated in war, that almost all the nobles of our

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* v. c. 9.

† Rob. d'Arbriselle, Opus Quadripartit. Præf.

country used to send him presents of horses and precious clothes to be associated with him. One day a girl of twelve years old, daughter of a certain knight, being exorcised by some monks in a certain church, burst into laughing, and cried, 'Lo, my friend comes, my friend comes.' Then asking of whom she spoke, she replied, 'You will see him;' for she spoke of this knight who was then far off, but the nearer he came to the church the more she rejoiced; and when he came into the church she rose up and clapped her hands, saluting him with, 'Lo, here is my friend; give place, give place; let him approach.' He was splendidly dressed, and coming up he asked her, 'Am I your friend?' The demon replied, 'Yea, my best friend, for you do all my will;' at which words the knight, sufficiently disturbed though he dissembled, said, laughing, 'You are a foolish devil. If a wise one, you would come with us to tournaments at which men are slain. Why vex this innocent girl, who has not sinned?' 'If you wish me to go with you, will you allow me to enter your body?' 'Certainly not,' replied the knight; when the devil said, 'Let me sit on your saddle?' 'No.' 'Then on some part of the horse or bridle?' and, when the other refused, the devil said, 'I cannot run on foot; if I am to go with you, let me have some place about you;' and the knight, pitying the girl, said, 'You may come on a fold of my cloak if you will promise not to hurt me, and to leave me when I order you.' Then, promising, the demon left the girl, and from that hour, following the knight to tournaments, caused him to triumph with glory. When the knight used to pray in a church, the demon would say, 'You are too long muttering;' when he took holy water, 'Take care not to touch me.' At that day the crusade being preached, and the knight entering the church to be signed, the demon endeavoured to draw him back, saying, 'What do you do here?' 'I propose to serve God and renounce you.' 'In what have I displeased you?' asked Satan. 'Lo, I take the cross,' said the knight, 'and I now charge you to leave me according to your vow;' when the devil left him. After two years serving Christ, the knight returned, built a great rich hospital for pilgrims and the poor, and endowed it with more than 300 silver pounds of annual revenue; in which hospital, to the present day, he serves the members of Christ, along with his wife, in a religious habit, a devout host to all monks, to whom he loves to say jestingly, 'You lord abbots and monks are not saints. We knights that hold tournaments are the true saints, for the demons obey us.' Doubtless it was the virtue of compassion which obtained forgiveness for the knight from God *." But, you say, it is only persons under the influence of religion who pretend to have any experimental certainty respecting that

* lib. x. c. xi.

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which gives a name to this road. In the world the devil is unknown. Well, the old wayfarers have their convictions to explain the grounds of your opinion? In the Magnum Speculum we read that a certain hermit, led once by an angel to a place where were many monks, beheld a multitude of demons infesting all their haunts; and then, on proceeding to a great city, he saw only one demon, sitting over the gate as if in perfect idleness, and he explained this, saying, that all in the city conformed to his will, and that one demon was enough to guard them; whereas in the abbey all resisted him, and therefore so many were employed against the monks *. Let us return to mark the ordinary impressions of men who are travellers on this road. "In a village near Caen," says William of Newbury, "there was a vision which made King Richard the First think about his conscience; for a certain man of that country, after making a pilgrimage to St. James, and also to Jerusalem, related to the bishop of Caen, on his return, that the demon had appeared to him on his way, and amongst other terrible things he said to him, that it was he who had prompted the duke of Austria to seize the king of England; that he had kept constant company with the said king since his return from captivity; that he assisted in his chamber as a servant; and that he kept constant watch over his treasures at Chinon. After hearing that, King Richard was struck with fear; and, being moved by Him who toucheth the mountains and they smoke, he began to wish to live more chastely, and to dispense alms from his treasury more liberally to the poor †."

The ancient narratives ascribe a language to the demon more resembling the ignoble and burlesque scurrility of vicious men, or the conventional slang of heretics and infidels at the present day, than the dignified harangues which modern poets put in his mouth. Cæsarius supplies an instance. "In the town of Endenig, near Bonn," says he, "a certain noble knight, named Walter, devout to our house and order, falling sick and lying alone, a devil appeared at the foot of his bed in the form of an ape with great horns, who said that he was come to take his soul. 'Depart! that you shall not. I commend myself to Christ.' And the devil said, 'Walter! if you consent to me, I will cure you and enrich you.' The soldier answered, 'I have enough—I don't care for your fallacious riches. Whence have you treasures?' 'Beneath yon court there are vast treasures hidden.' The knight then asking about different knights dead, the demon told him, laughing, that they were in torment. The fire is a milk-bath for them. 'Naming a monk,' he says,

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* Magnum Speculum, 214.

† Rer. Anglic. lib. v. c. 7.

'that scurvy bald-pate—calvus ille atque pediculosus;'—a religious widow, 'that one-eyed hag.' We have so saddled your brother Lambert, that he cannot escape us." He had lately died an avaricious moneyed man. "'Tell me, where were you last?' 'I and my comrades were at the funeral of a certain abbess of a black order, waiting for her soul.' 'How many were you there?' The demon answered, 'Do you know the wood of Cottinforst?' 'I know it well,' said the knight. 'There are not so many leaves on the trees as we were in company there, though it is the greatest wood in the province.' 'And what did you gain?' 'Nothing; she was a religious woman.' Being asked if he was present at the death of Lord Gevard, our Abbot then lately deceased; he answered, 'We were as multiplied there as the sand on the sea-shore; but we gained nothing; for these filthy creatures, lying grunting on the ground like pigs, did not suffer us to approach nearer. They have, moreover, a whispering-house, in which they take from us those who might have been ours.' And the knight asked, 'How did you dare to come to the death of such a holy man?' 'Dare!' answered the devil, 'I sat on an arm of the cross when the Son of God expired.' All this was related by the knight when he had recovered his health*." It is remarkable that in general the same coarse buffoonery attributed to the demon in this narrative characterizes all such representations of him. Mathieu Paris speaks of the "mocking voice of Satan†." The demon uses slang phrases, as if affecting a language of his own. So, in an old legend related by Vincent of Beauvais, he calls St. James "that Gallician without a head‡." The demon in possessed persons called St. Ignatius of Loyola "that bald cripple§." From whom can it be, I would ask, that the Lutheran Reformers of the sixteenth century, the champions of Protestantism now in England, and their allies of the Voltairean school throughout Europe, borrow their phraseology while assailing altars, Pontiffs, Catholic thrones, and all that is majestical on earth? Think what you will of human nature, of the force of circumstances, or of the effects of instruction, it is difficult, not to say impossible, if you refuse to discern a diabolic action, to explain how the purity and innocence, the justice and sublimity of the Catholic realities which surround men should be maligned and blasphemed by intelligences of the same origin as those of a St. Thomas, a St. Bernard, a Bossuet, or a Fénélon, which behold in them the action of the all-wise and Almighty God.

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* Liv. xii. c. v. † Ad ann. 1151. ‡ Spec. Hist. 24, 25.

§ Bartoli, Hist. de S. Ignat. liv. v.

We have met the devil, then, in his bestial capacity—ignoble, hideous, burlesque. It would require too long delay to mark his operations in the spiritual and intellectual order. Let it suffice to hear Alanus briefly note them as,—

> "Aerios cives, quibus aer carcer, abyssus
> Pœna, dolor risus, mors vivere, culpa triumphus;
> Quorum mens humili livoris læsa veneno
> In genus humanum virus transfundit, ut ipsum
> Consimili sanie morboque laboret eodem.
> Qui velut aerio vestiti corpore, nostram
> Mentiti speciem, multo phantasmate brutos
> Deludunt homines, falsi verique sophistæ.
> In tenebris lucem simulant, in lite quietem,
> Abscondunt sub pace dolos, in felle figurant
> Dulcia, sub specie recti vitiata propinant.
> ——Qui majestate superna
> Dejecti, sine fine sibi meruere ruinam[*]."

It remains, however, to observe the fiend in the character which excited so deeply the attention of the old jurisconsults—that of the persevering terrible pleader against the human race. St. Antoninus, in his Sum, relates an instance of the devil pleading in a legal manner, and claiming a certain soul as his property by right and law; on which occasion the mother of Christ came forward to assist the sinner, and, following the adversary on his own ground, demonstrated, by authorities of human law of which she used the very terms, that he could not make out his claim[†]. Within the domain of theologico-legal literature, two remarkable monuments, attesting the mediæval impression, are presented by the Procès entre Belial et Jésus, by Brother Pierre Ferget, already noticed on a former road; and the Tractatus inter Virginem Mariam et Dæmonem, by the celebrated Bartolus of Sassoferrato. In the former Belial demands his rights as the Seigneur of mankind, saying, "Je demande à estre admis pour droicte possessoire—take into account que Sathan et l'université infernale a eu puissance et jurisdiction sur toutes gens et quils ont eu ceste possession en bonne foy et possede long temps, quil y a prescription de quatre mille ans et outtre." He pleads against Jesus, who has acted, he says, "au grant prejudice et injure de la congregation infernale;" he urges, "De la part de toute la congregation infernale contre Jesus et contre toute personne qui vouldra legitimement intervenir pour luy. Que comme ainsi soit la dicte universite infernelle aye tenu et possede enfer, la mer et les hommes habitans en terre; en totalle et pleniere jurisdiction et par si grant temps quil nest

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[*] Alani Encyclopædia, lib. iv. c. 5.

[‡] iv. p. tit. 15. c. 5. § 1.

memoire du contraire, par la tradition et repudiation faicte à Sathan et la sienne universite par le tres hault et universel Seigneur pour le peche et inobedience du premier homme Adam, audit Sathan appartient la dicte seigneurie comme souvent-fois a este dit*." Such is the claim set up by Satan in the first of these representations; and whatever may be thought of the form, it must be acknowledged, that even in the nineteenth century he who should seek by such imagery to express "que Sathan a grandement elargi sa Seigneurie sur toute la terre," would not be straightened for proof to support his proposition. In the tract by Bartoli the judicial learning of the adversary is maintained with still greater parade of erudition. Here the demon again applies to the weaker sex, and suggests to the wife of Pilate to prevent the death of Christ lest men might be saved. "Dæmon ubicunque est," says Bartoli, "præsentialiter, potentialiter cruciatur. Quia pœna ipsum comitatur, sicut lepra leproso est infixa, tamen pœna nullatenus in aliquo relevatur. The demon adversary says, 'I cite the human race to its trial ut instit. de pœ. tem. li. § fin. et extra de prob. c.' Christ then fixes Good Friday for the day of trial. The demon, not foreseeing apparently English legislation of the nineteenth century, answers, 'Ea dies ubique locorum est insignis et celebris, ut ext. de fo. comp. c. fi. sic et jura per ora Principum divinitus promulgata testantur ut c. de præsc. con. tempo. 1 fin. c. de vere in enun. liv. 1. quare citatio non valeret.' The objection is overruled—tu scis quia totus dies cedit humano generi. The devil then attending, hears this order:—'Vade et expecta.' So he sits down and hears others called, and himself not called. At nones he loses all patience, and complains aloud; but he is again answered, 'Vade et expecta.' So he waits till dusk, and then he begins to vociferate, Ubi est justitia tua, Domine, quam et in cœlis vix invenio? At last, the time being come, he is heard. The angel Gabriel is called up as the Advocate of the human race; and then the devil speaks: 'Nemo credat quod ego velim procedere nisi curiali modo. Therefore, the contumacy of the human race being evident in not being present here, I demand letters attesting that I have sufficiently appeared nemine pro humano genere comparente: nescio quid minus possum petere, ut ff. de ser. urb. præd. 1.' The Judge, by way of equity deciding, postpones the cause to the next day. The devil exclaims, but is driven out. Then, descending into hell, he convokes the other demons, who agree to send him back the next day as the procurator of infernal wickedness. Meanwhile, through all the intervening time, there is great rumour in heaven, and it is said how the human race

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* F. 43.

is contumacious, the choir of saints praying the Judge for mercy till their voices reach the blessed Virgin, who determines to appear for it. Accordingly, the next day she comes all gloriously to Court, where the devil had been waiting from a very early hour; and then turning to the Judge, she says, 'Fili mi, si est aliquis qui contra genus humanum causam se habere dicat, assurgat.' The devil instantly rises and comes forward demissa facie et animo petulanti, not daring to look at the blessed Virgin, as hating the light. Then, the Judge inviting him to speak, he says, 'Sancte pater, non moveat te caro et sanguis tuus nec etiam amor matris tuæ, arg. ex de præb. c. grave et c., but only regard justice. I would now plead, but I do not see the person involved, as per Cy. in L. fi. c. de edi. divi Adr. tol.' The blessed Virgin pleads, that she appeared in behalf of man. The devil objects that women cannot plead, as ff. de post. L. 1. and 39. 8. can. 3. in prin.: besides, being mother of the Judge, she is a person suspected, as de ap. c. and c. de asses et domm. But the blessed Virgin shows that for miserable persons they are admitted, as de proc. c. pe et c. and l. fœm. de proc.; and the devil still objecting, the Judge proclaims her a legitimate advocate; therefore he says, 'Let the prosecutor nequitiæ infernalis proceed.' The devil then demands to be put in quiet pacific possession of men as his ancient right. The Virgin answers, 'The devils were never possessors of men, but only jailors of the wicked in hell; for men always belonged to their Creator, against which right there can be no prescription.' Then the devil, gnashing his teeth, pulls a book out of his bag, and begins to read Gen. iii.:—'De omni ligno and moriemini;' adding. 'I require these words to stand firm.' Whereupon he cites Scripture to prove the fall. The blessed Virgin then argues, that as the devil was the instigator, which he never conceals, by right and law, as being himself guilty, he cannot be suffered to proceed. The devil pleads, that judges are still bound to punish the evil without an accuser, as ff. ad l. Agl. de Sen. excom. c. The Virgin replies, that having before made his choice of the mode of proceeding, and having now changed it, the whole cause is irregular, and must be quashed; and then weeping and sobbing, and lamenting the human race on bended knees, she beseeches her Son, and reminds him that this demon was he who spat on him, and scourged and crucified him; and that she who is his mother implores Him to spare the human race, and to send away the demon. Then the Judge, moved with pity for his mother, orders the demon to depart, and denies his suit. The devil says, he is not a just Judge to heed flesh and blood in judgment. He then cites the Gospel, and requires Him to confirm its sentence, quia princeps hujus mundi venit. 'For thou knowest,' he adds, 'that I am the

Prince of this world, being the Prince of sinners; and, since men are sinners, I must needs be their Prince. Thou art the Prince of the good. Act, then, as a just Judge. Separate the sinner from the good, and let each of us possess our own, and then I promise thee that thy kingdom will not be greater than one seed of corn compared to mine.' Then the Judge, turning to his mother, asks what she can answer? She replies, that the cunning one ought not to be listened to; for, seeing that Christ has redeemed man by dying once, it is not lawful to dispute any more about saving the human race—or appeal from the divine fiat. The devil answers, 'Satis admiror quia non solum mihi sed summæ Deitati vultis finem imponere—but I repeat it, man sinned.' The Virgin replies, 'I know not what he wishes to argue. Require him to specify exactly on what charge he rests, and I will then point and glose the claim.' 'Truly,' replies the devil, 'she pretends to school me as if I were a boy; but I want not her glose—ego enim verba mea ita apte dico ut non egent aliqua punctatione vel glosatione de mundo. If you will not hear me, I will depart, and then I shall see clearly that there is no justice here.' 'Let us try, then,' replied the Judge, 'whether the demon's cause be just.' 'I require that men be punished,' cries the demon, 'since men have sinned.' 'Yes,' says the Virgin; 'but you do not add, that they sinned through you, and that you are the real criminal.' 'Let him speak,' says the Judge. 'I care not,' replies the demon, 'through whose fault they sinned; for it is written, that they who sin shall bear the penalty; and, as man sinned against infinite goodness, I require that his pain be infinite.' 'Hear me, my Son,' says the Virgin; 'I argue that, as thou art infinite goodness, thou canst remit an infinite injury.' Then said the Judge to the demon, 'Thou knowest that I hung on the cross for the human race, where its sin was punished, and it is not just to punish twice the same offence, as ff. de nav. can. stab. 1. The day of judgment, then, must be waited for, when the evil will perish, and the just triumph.' 'Say not so, King of Glory,' replies the demon; 'for man has sinned since then, and therefore this day let him be punished as the law requires.' 'Thou arguest falsely,' replies the Virgin; 'for grace abolishes his guilt. I demand, then, beloved Son, that thou give sentence in favour of the human race.' Then Jesus orders the angel Gabriel, with a golden trumpet, to cite the blessed Virgin Advocate of the human race, and the procurator of infernal wickedness to hear the sentence on Easter day; and, when that day came, the Judge pronounced sentence, solemnly absolving the human race, and condemning the demon to eternal flames. The devil departs—the sentence is promulgated, read, and vulgarized—John the Evangelist, Notary of Christ, John the Baptist, Francis, and

Domenick, Scribes of the Court, engrossed it. Peter, and Paul, and Michael the archangel, and a copious multitude of saints, signing as witnesses—the 6th of April, 1311. Then the angels and the celestial choir sung, 'Salve, regina mater misericordiæ, vitæ dulcedo et spes nostra, salve.' And so the trial finishes*."— Explicit processus et tractatus quæst. ventilatæ coram Domino nostro Jesu Christo, inter Virginem Mariam advocatam humani generis ex una parte et diabolum et genus humanum ex alia parte, comparatus et compilatus per eximium legum Doct. D. Bar. à Saxoferrato civem Perusiu. Cujus anima requiescat in pace. Amen.

The grave authority of the renowned jurisconsult of Sassoferrata will be deemed, I hope, sufficient to excuse our having paused so long to observe such ancient representations of the enemy of man; their form is fanciful; the thought from which they originated is no less just and profound. But it will be well after this halt to proceed hastily, and, having beheld the Evil One both in his bestial and solemn character, to take note of the signal and the issue to truth which such sinister rencounters yield.

Now it is but a natural inference, from what has already been observed, to suppose that to escape from such a pass as we have been following keen desire will direct some men at all times; "nam nullus est in mundo," as we read in the Revelations of St. Bridget, and as all experience proves, "sic radicatus cum Diabolo cujus cor non quandoque visitet et commoveat spiritus bonus; sic etiam nullus est, sic bonus quem Diabolus non apponit libenter tangere tentatione†." Dante describes a scene, of which we often see at least a reflection upon earth:—

——— "As one that falls
He knows not how, by force demoniac dragg'd
To earth, or through obstruction fettering up
In chains invisible the powers of man,
Who, risen from his trance, gazeth around,
Bewilder'd with the monstrous agony
He hath endured, and, wildly staring, sighs,
So stood aghast the sinner when he rose‡."

It will be impossible to nullify for all victims of an evil guide the force of such considerations as are presented by Trithemius, when he says, "Quisquis hic vult esse Diaboli discipulus, nisi pœnitentiam agat ante mortem, socius erit sui magistri in pœnis§." All men are not like Schiller's Schweitzer, who boasts that he

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* Bartoli à Saxoferrato Op. Tom. ix. 127, edit. Ven. MDXCVI.

† Rev. S. Birgit. lib. i. c. 44.

‡ Inf. 24.

§ Antip. Maleficiorum, lib. i. c. 3.

has courage enough to walk through hell barefoot. Not even from the present horror can all minds wholly free themselves. True—

——— "the poet's eye
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothings
A local habitation and a name.
So, in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush supposed a bear!
But all the story of the night told over,
And all these minds transfigured so together,
More witnesseth than fancy's images,
And grows to something of great constancy."

Of the dark future, at all events, none can escape the foreshadows. Vulgar prejudice, mere superstition! so says the philosophy of despair; but your own heart, which knocks against your ribs with terror, even while you thus argue, gives your tongue the lie. These cobwebs of systems are swept away by the single word, death. Catholicism will then be recalled as that which yields the power of escaping from such influence here, and from such society hereafter. Angels are ever waiting for those whose wills have grace to decline the company of devils. The Catholic church then stands before them like the castle on the height, presenting an emblem of safety contrasted with the horrid valley through which Sintram passes. Imperceptibly many are led by the force of circumstances gathering around them to take shelter there. "Longe est à peccatoribus salus; et tamen," adds St. Augustin, "propinquabam sensim et nesciens*." "There is a treasure," says St. Bridget, "which will deliver all who can gain it from misery, but it is inclosed in a strong castle, defended by four bolts, surrounded with lofty and thick walls, having before them two deep and wide ditches. The treasure consists of the words of Christ; and these intrenchments which keep off men are sins†." There is power to escape thither, and pass in and secure that treasure; for, in fine, faith is heard saying, with St. Bernard, of Satan to his followers: "Debilis est hostis, qui non vincit nisi volentem." There are those who, like Lot, hear themselves pressed as if by angels, and who, by angelic ministry are, like him, constrained; "for, as he lingered, they took his hand, and the hand of his wife, and of his two daughters, because the Lord spared him." Catholicism puts to flight the enemy of man with potent words and corresponding deeds. It forces him to recognize his sentence, and to give honour to the

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* Confess. v. 14.

† Rev. S. Birg. iii. 13.

blessed Trinity, by departing with all his mischievous malignant arts, no more presuming to influence either in body or in mind, either in his senses or in his property, the creature redeemed by the passion and blood of Christ, on whom it confers benediction, peace, and protection, delivering it from all diabolic company, and associating it with Jesus and Mary, with angels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, and with all the saints reigning in eternal felicity. But not yet have we the whole circuit made which is formed by false feet. Let us then proceed further, following a track of which the name is only slightly changed from that which was yielded by the cursed tree; and we shall find that those who tread it have yet other signals, and still more issues left, directing them to safety in the central truth.

CHAPTER III.

THE ROAD OF POOR SINNERS.

NOTING still forest lessons as we pass along, we see that trees have parasites, insidious enemies that twist their folds round the yet living trunk, and waste its substance. The mistletoe pierces through the bark of noble oaks, and draws from the sap of the tree the nourishment it wants for itself. These vines too, clasping elms, supply an instance of analogy; for, as Anacharsis used to say, they bear three kinds of fruit, pleasure, drunkenness, and repentance. We have seen that a sense of the horror and deformity of sin can direct wanderers from these crooked pestilential paths. Let us then, dear companions, who are all equally concerned in the theme, proceed to mark that the misery produced by it can form other issues.

Hark! some one in the wood sings the sweet plaintive song of our old poet:—

"When that I was and a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.

"But when I came to man's estate,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,
'Gainst knave and thief men shut their gate,
For the rain it raineth every day."

It is some one probably who laments his having advanced to the point where we are arrived in the forest, and left behind him so far the innocent roads of childhood and of youth. "The march of human desires through sensual and immaterial regions," says a late author, "is curious. Man demands happiness from pleasures which prove painful; from vanity which does not satisfy; from avarice, from pride, from envy; and, the centripetence augmenting the centrifugence, he finds himself repulsed by all. Some at last demand it from true glory, and there they find God*." The wild songs of Undine are therefore in harmony with theologic truth, for we catch in real life such echoes as,—

"A rill would leave its misty vale,
And fortunes wild explore;
Weary at length it reach'd the main,
And sought its vale no more."

"Since you have experienced like myself," says Petrarch, "how often the event deceives our hopes, you must, in the pursuit of this sovereign good which never displeases, elevate your heart to a state more happy. This life on earth is like a meadow where the serpent lies amidst the flowers and grass. If you desire to have your mind at rest before the final day, follow the small number and not the common crowd†." Here we mingle with a sorrowful multitude who involuntarily bear witness to the Catholic truth, against which their lives have been a vain protest; for now they lament alone, saying, "Lassati sumus in via iniquitatis, ambulavimus vias difficiles." "O blindness of the sons of Adam," exclaims St. Thomas of Villanova, after hearing them, "who prefer serving sin with labour to serving God with gladness‡!" Have you chosen this place, for the ease you find to slumber here as in the vales of heaven! "Omne peccatum amarum est et molestum," says St. Jerome. Men in these days denounce such sentences as arising from superstition; but let them pause,—

——"Ah! little do they know,
That what to them seem'd vice might be but woe."

The seven sins are compared by St. Bonaventura to seven diseases:—"pride to a tumour, envy to leprosy, anger to madness, sloth to lethargy, avarice to dropsy, gluttony to epilepsy, luxury to a fever§." These men, to vice as constant as the galley-slave at his oar, are, in fact, conscious what even infidel poets remark, that "all-sufficing nature can chastise those who trans-

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* Etudes sur les Idées, &c. 1.

† Son. 78.

‡ De Fœdere P. Christ.

§ Compend. Theol. Verit. lib. iii. c. 14.

gress her law." Brother Giles therefore used to say, "I wish that men would do what is best for their bodies in this world; for the body participates in the health of the soul*." Tigellinus was never released from his penal, self-imposed labours. "His detestable debauchery," says Plutarch, "lasted to the end, so that his impious licentiousness and incontinence became a want to him even in the arms of death†." There is no age without such examples. And again, to look at a different point, see how strange is the illusion arising from human pride, whose victims too often die equally deceived, equally constant. "Va donc. Qu' as-tu trouvé? ton caprice accompli; voluptueux, la tombe, et vaniteux, l'oubli!" A French historian cites the remark of a preacher, who said that "in damnation fire is the least evil; for that the proper punishment of the damned consists in the infinite progress in vice and sin, in the hardening of the soul, and in its becoming constantly more depraved, sinking every minute deeper into evil in a geometrical progression during eternity." The progress is perceptible on earth where men can witness, not without a shudder, the interior economy of evil breasts.

"Alack, whence once our grace we have forgot,
Nothing goes right; we would, and we would not!"

The hell, which some benighted victims would deem visionary, does not always begin in the next life. In the present world even men can often behold some of its spectacles,—"weeping and gnashing of teeth." What is the hell in which the rich man lies buried? "I answer," says St. Anthony of Padua, "that it is the abominable conscience of the sinner; for that is the dark place, the place of horror, the habitation of the demon, the place of confusion. All these are contained in the conscience of the sinner; it is a place of discord, a place of continual tumult, a place of perpetual battle‡."

"Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream;
And, when consummated, it is terror,
Madness, crime, remorse, abandoned hope,
And self-contempt, bitterer to drink than blood."

"Without doubt," as Antonio de Guevara says, "the heart is more cruelly martyrized with its own thoughts than the body with all the four elements§." Men reduced to this condition

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* Buccius, Lib. Aur. Conform.

† In Vit. Oth.

‡ Fer. v. Hebd. ii. in Quad.

§ Myst. of Mt. Calv.

are like the Romans besieged in the Capitol by the Gauls:— "velut assueti malis, abalienaverant ab sensu suarum animos," says Livy; and they looked at nothing but the arms in their hands, sullen, reckless, hopeless*. They witness proof that their own violence is impotent. "Iniqui," says St. Isidore, "dum constantiam justi in persecutionibus suis aspiciunt, mentis confusione tabescunt†." What heart so brutish as not to feel misgivings lest indeed they may have reason to fear the worst? Look where they will, there is a fearful handwriting set up as it were before their eyes by nature, by tradition, and by the Holy Scripture, in these words: "Ecce, qui elongant se à te peribunt‡." Of all losses to which the human nature is liable, the most fatal, the most deplorable is that of the will; and at length, by dint of wilful transgressions, man loses the power of willing what is good; consequently he loses faith, if he ever had it, or he renders hopeless its attainment. O what a ruin or what a desolation is there! He cannot believe; he cannot see; he tells you so—tells you he is obstinate. That said, he turns, like the lost spirits seen by Dante, back,—

—— "o'er the filthy way,
And syllable to us speaks none§."

Nebuchodonoser put out the eyes of King Zedechia, bound him with chains, and led him into Babylon. "So," says St. Anthony of Padua, "the devil first blinds the sinner lest he should know his iniquity, and afterwards binds him with the chains of evil custom, and places him in the prison of obstinacy, lest he should issue forth in the light of confession‖."

—— "May not some with shame
Recal the moments when some mighty chain
Of spiritual dependencies appear'd
Before the soul; but suddenly the shock
Of grovelling thoughts bedimm'd the glorious scene
Ere fully view'd, and lo! from memory's page
Vanish'd the record¶!"

"Non nobis illuxit lumen. Sol non ortus est nobis**." Such is then the cry. "A dark will," as St. Chrysostom says, "cannot see things of light††." "A malignant will," adds St. Anthony of Padua, citing the words, "can no more see the mysteries of faith than a blind man can see the sun; and he distinguishes well, saying the mysteries of piety, because he sees clearly

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* Liv. v. 42.
† De Sum. Bon. lib. iii. 61.
‡ Ps. 72.
§ Inf. 9.
‖ S. Ant. Pad. Expositio Myst. in lib. iv. Reg. c. 25.
¶ Morris.
** Sap. v.
†† Hom. 31.

enough the mysteries of vice. It is a malignant eye with which the devil sees, who cannot, as man, with a holy eye see God. And hence it is that a bad man always sees the mysteries of sin, nay, sometimes he judges that he sees them where they are not, as we read in the Gospel, where the unjust Scribes and Pharisees, blinded by malice, did not discern the transgression of the divine law of honouring parents, and yet endeavoured to point out in the disciples a culpable simplicity, saying, 'Quare discipuli,'" &c.* Then elsewhere the holy friar breaks forth on the same spectacle, saying, "Miserable condition of the sinner not to believe the Redemer!—non crediderunt in Deo nec speraverunt in salutari ejus; yet they believe the traitor. Locutus est ad eos verba pacifica in dolo et crediderunt ei, et irruit super civitatem repente †." How many now proclaim from the housetops that they can see and teach others to see the mysteries of Babylon—the mysteries of Paris or of London, perhaps, while all the time supplying proof that they are unable to behold the mysteries of Sion, which therefore they pronounce to be a pure nonentity! Hear how the poet describes one who had not twenty years, and who had described the wretched circle:—

"Il ne croyait à rien, jamais il ne révait;
Le bâillement hideux siégeait à son chevet;
Toujours son ironie, inféconde et morose,
Jappait sur les talons de quelque grande chose;
Il se faisait de tout le centre et le milieu;
Il achetait l' amour, il aurait vendu Dieu.
Il n' aimait pas les champs: sa mere l' eunuyait.
Enfin, ivre, énervé, ne sachant plus que faire
Sans haine, sans amour, et toujours, O misère!
Avant la fin du jour blasé du lendemain."

The ancients used to pour wine on the roots of some trees, and Pliny says that it may be useful to do so, since trees also can drink wine; but, alas! where is the remedy for such parched, withered souls as these that are confronted with us now? To them indeed there is no wine, unless the mother of Jesus should move her Son to work a miracle for them. In the waterless plains of South America animals seek the melon cactus, which lies half buried in the dry sand, encased in formidable thorns, of which the interior yields refreshing juice; but where is the solace, let them traverse what thorns they will, for such an arid wilderness as this? The forest has its ferine spectres that supply an apt image there of men's wretched state—hideous forms howling like him who cries,—

"To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike is hell, or paradise, or heaven."

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* Fer. iv. Hebd. iii. in Quad.

† Serm. Dom. in Passione.

For in the winter, when all leaves are dead, and every thing of life seems perished, under the moon belated travellers behold the passage of wolves so lean that their jaws are like a cleft stick. Such are famished libertines when they have devoured every thing. Oh, if it had only some veil, that horrid vice, under which it might shroud itself! "But," continues Schiller's profligate, struck with remorse, "there it is, glaring horribly through the sallow, leaden eye, proclaiming itself in the sunken deathlike look; ghastly protruding bones; the faltering, hollow voice —preaching audibly from the shattered shaking frame, piercing to the most vital marrow, and sapping the manly strength of youth. The idea sickens me—all the senses shrink from it;" but like the hungry wolf they pass quickly, dragging on their skeleton remains far across the forest, till its unfathomed shades at last conceal them from every human eye. To a sense of present misery must be added often a vague but not less desolating apprehension of future punishment, recalling, if they prefer such images, "the twisted snakes of Ixion,"

"Immanemque rotam, et non exsuperabile saxum*."

The superstition, of which traces can be detected in many who set Catholicism at defiance, indicates this pressure. In Calderon's play of Devotion to the Cross, a robber is represented laughing at the false devotion of his tribe, impressed with a consciousness of its vanity, and saying, "We robbers never want devotion such as it is." St. Augustin says that "some men, if they make the sign of the cross on themselves, instead of expelling rather confine the demon within them. Yet, in general, even this gesture, mechanically suggested, fails them; so we read that a certain reprobate at his death being exhorted to make the sign of the cross in token of his faith, replied, 'I wish to do so, but cannot, being weighed down by the scales of the dragon †.'" For there are stages of depravity when that high Providence that ordains the fitting penalty here and hereafter, giving man premature experience of that foss which consists in a profoundly reprobate sense, as in the fifth that Dante saw, "power of departing thence takes from them all." The Pagan in an old mystery answers Clotilde, when she begs of him to become a Christian, "Je n' y acounte pas II pommes ce que vous me dites." In the ancient books instances too are given of Christians most involved in transgressions of the holy law, who went on multiplying their alms, in hopes that liberality to the poor would cover them, and who were shown to be doomed, nevertheless, after death, to eternal torments, dying without confession,

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* Georg. iii. 39.

† Magnum Spec. 156.

and confiding in the remembrance of their alms[*]. It is still the same voice that says,—

—— "freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds."

The terror, however, of a future personal judgment has seldom failed to hold out to the last a signal that might direct men to the central source of all true hope and consolation; for there are judgments even in life to move them, and reports and presentiments of judgments after it which make the boldest quail, impossible, as they find it, to lose all knowledge of Him,—

ὅς τε μάλιστα νεμεσσᾶται κακὰ ἔργα[†].

"O consuetudo peccandi," exclaims Cicero to men amerced of all true life, "quantam habes jucunditatem in improbis et audacibus, quum pœna abfuit et licentia consecuta est[‡]!" But Justice watches, as the poet says, and comes sometimes speedily, visibly, and sometimes in a secret manner, slow:—

ῥοπὴ δ' ἐπισκοπεῖ δίκας
ταχεῖα, τοῖς μὲν ἐν φάει·
τὰ δ' ἐν μεταιχμίῳ σκότου
μένει, χρονίζοντ' ἄχη βρύει·
τοὺς δ' ἄκραντος ἔχει νύξ[§].

Sometimes it comes visibly on the way of ambition, as when Grimvald, guardian of the son of Sigebert, killed his ward to make room for his own son, who was the next heir, and was in his turn betrayed by Clovis, king of Neustria, and put to death in prison, along with his son, who had been the occasion of his crime; so terminating the race of Pepin. At other times, the vengeance is suspended till the future woe of which Thurcill and so many others are said to have had visions; when in one place were seen, as we are told, fosses full of black salt water, so acrid that it would strip wood of its bark instantaneously, into which were thrown in a mass murderers, robbers, ravishers, poisoners, and rich men who had practised exactions, who there remained boiling for ever, while demons stood round with red-hot forks to throw back any that endeavoured to emerge[||]—forms attributable, if you will, to circumstances or characters, but not the less growing out of universal traditions, supplying by the substance no unapt commentary on the sibyl, where she is said to cry,—

—— "Ah, vos resipiscite stulti
Mortales, magnumque Deum irritare cavete[¶]!"

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[*] Mag. Spec. 131.

[†] xiv. 284.

[‡] In Ver. II. lib. ii.

[§] Choëph. 59.

[||] Mat. Paris, ad ann. 1206.

[¶] Sib. Orac. lib. iv.

A vague, indistinct fear remains to those who follow this sad track. "There are three words," says an old writer, "of which the mere anticipation can direct, by salutary dread, the soul: three words—Redde rationem; Æternitas; Ite—the last, so familiar to the faithful, used in a different sense, preparing them daily at the holy mass for averting the same words coupled with reprobation. Tria sunt asperrima verba," adds this author,—

"Quæ tria per penitas ibunt dicta aspra medullas!
Da rationem: itote: et quod superest, æternum.
Quam dure hoc pavidas vibrabitur Ite per aures?
Quantus ab æthereo nunquam fragor ingruit axe."

But there are also issues of a different kind inviting men to the centre by the Catholic doctrines, which can allay these terrors, and furnish men oppressed by them with new hope and supernatural means of returning to the roads of God. From this deep hell of night and horror there are still breaks through which can be discerned the Catholic Church, of which two features can attract those who are sinking consciously into ruin, consisting in her doctrine of grace, and in the mercy with which she receives sinners.

From this road men are directed to the Catholic Church, as being, not a porch or an academy for a select few of eminent virtue, such as a false philosophy would conjure up, but a city of refuge for all sinners, in which criminals of every kind may take sanctuary, and find themselves on a level with the just; for now who needs to be reminded that, so far from excluding the wearied and wounded wanderers on the ways of iniquity, who have no claim or privilege of their own to produce, the gates of this fortress are thrown open to no men who demand to enter them as their right, since whoever seeks admittance must present himself in the same capacity, and be received to pure grace under the same form of poverty and personal unworthiness. This is the passport for eternity, furnished with which, Chateaubriand consoles himself, when stopped at a frontier, by saying, "No one will be rejected by Him who distributes the bread and opens the Hostel to the needy traveller." "Those whom here thou seest," said a voice to Dante within Paradise, "were lowly to confess themselves of God's free bounty who had made them apt*." St. Bernard says that grace enters not into the heart of him who trusts in his own works and merits.

——— "For from without if love
Be offer'd to us, and the spirit knows
No other feeling, tend she right or wrong
Is no desert of hers†."

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* 29. † Purg. 18.

"Secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum," are the Davidic words ever on the Church's tongue. "Quot enim justi," adds Savonarola, "tot miserationes. Nullus gloriari potest in semetipso[*]." We have read elsewhere, that when the vault in which lay the body of the good Duke Humphrey was discovered at St. Alban's Abbey, at the foot of the coffin there was found painted on the wall a picture of the crucifixion, with a chalice at each hand, another at the side, and a third at the feet, to receive the blood trickling from the Saviour's wounds, with a hand extending from the dust with this scroll,—"Blessed Lorde, have mercye on mee." To the Church which justifies by her doctrine the employment of such imagery, the human heart will ever feel itself attached. "Man in himself," as the great Catholic poet adds, "had ever lacked the means of satisfaction; and for this reason he would have vainly tried, out of his own sufficiency, to pay the rigid debt[†]."

"And merely in respect to his prime gift,
Not in reward of meritorious deed,
Hath each his several degree assign'd[‡]."

What gracious sounds then reach us thus, through all ages conveyed in lofty patristic lore, in high inspired song, and in the harmony of cloistral mediæval strains. "Since satisfaction for sin no one ought to pay excepting man," says the Abbot Rupertus; "and since no one could pay it excepting God, God, having compassion on man, who could only die for himself, by dying for us paid our debt[§]." "Protector noster aspice Deus, et respice in faciem Christi tui.—Look not on us, but on the face of thy Christ, for our sakes pale with death." So prays and teaches to pray St. Anthony of Padua[‖]. In fact, as Rupertus says, "the conclusion of all Catholic prayers, per Dominum nostrum, shows that Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and man, and that it is impossible for the eternal benefits of God to arrive at us by any other way than by Himself; for through Him we seek and obtain, as when, by the intervention of crystal, we obtain celestial fire from the distant sun[¶]." The verb merentur combined with heaven, which occurs so often in the liturgy, is rightly translated as expressing the mere act of attaining to it. Mereor signified to arrive at without reference to any personal merit. So in the collect, "ut per ejus adventum purificatis tibi mentibus servire mereamur[**];" and in that, "ut in nomine dilecti filii tui mereamur bonis operibus

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[*] Sav. Med. in Ps. Miser.
[†] Par. 7.
[‡] Par. 32.
[§] De Divinis Officiis, lib. vi. c. 2.
[‖] Serm. Dom. v. post Pasch.
[¶] De Divinis Officiis, lib. i.
[**] 2nd Sund. of Adv.

abundare*." "Of all the saints from the beginning of the world," says Rupertus, "the passion of the Redeemer was the one sole salvation and expectation foretold by their concordant voices, and prefigured by their deeds†." "I am going to thee, O Lord," said St. Catherine of Sienna, "not trusting in my own merits, but in thy pure mercy, which I implore for the sake of thy precious blood." With these words, uttered with a seraphic expression, she expired.

Such are the immense, ineffable attractions of Catholicity, drawing sinners to the Church by its doctrine of atoning grace; but, while these exist in all their fulness, there is no visionary opening of heaven's gates, like that which Calvin sought, when nature recoils through secret presentiment of illusion; for Catholicism declares that man, as Passavante says, "must practise good, and so win merit by virtue of the grace which God freely bestows on him; though not by his works is he redeemed, which without grace would be of no value before God. So man, having the first grace of God which he merits not, but which is freely given to him, must seek to merit in acting according to that grace which renders his works meritorious and agreeable to God, and draws down greater grace and even glory‡," not cancelling thereby the freedom of the promise,—

——— "For God more bounty show'd,
Giving himself to make man capable
Of his return to life, than had the terms
Been mere and unconditional release§."

But still before him shines the glorious and immortal light, proclaiming that all derive their permission to enter the beatific pale alike through the passion and cross of the Redeemer; and that for sinners, therefore, who will apply as they are directed to receive the boon, there is hope of heaven. Still the proclamation is,—wherever stands the crucifix

——————— "Here is the source
Whence cause of merit in you is derived.
E'en as the affections, good or ill, she takes
Or severs, winnow'd as the chaff‖."

The same reasoning with which St. Bonaventura shows that the recovery of man was impossible without the incarnation and death of Christ¶, is employed by Dante in setting forth the fundamental doctrine of the Catholic Church; for again he hears,—

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* Sund. within octave of Christmas.

† De Div. Officiis, iii. c. 4.

‡ Specchio, &c.

§ Par. 7.

‖ Purg. 18.

¶ S. Bonavent. Amatorium.

"Thou knowest that is the bosom which pierced
By the keen lance, both after and before,
Such satisfaction offer'd as outweighs
Each evil in the scale*."

In fact, to show that Catholicity contains this essential root of all attractive grace for those who take this road, the whole literature and philosophy of every generation that was constant to it might be adduced. The ancient mysteries are but an expression of the popular mind during the middle ages; and there we see how clearly the doctrine of the atonement was imparted. In that old play, for instance, which is called "Un miracle de nostre Dame et de Clovis," the Archbishop is represented instructing Clovis on this point, after the battle, with a precision that leaves nothing for the decree of the Council of Trent in after-ages to supply. In the "Paphnuce and Thaïs," by Hrosvita, Thaïs, at the expiration of her dure penance, says, "It is not through my merit that I can hope for eternal beatitude." To whom the hermit replies, "Divine grace weighs not merits; for, if this gratuitous gift of the Divinity were only granted to merits, it would not be called grace; but God has from all eternity preferred mercy to punishment." On which dialogue a recent French commentator observes, "This merciful theology, and the passage on grace, prove that the barbarism of manners in the tenth century had not extended to doctrine." Every celebration of the Catholic mysteries was a fact proclaiming the freedom of salvation. "O gracious liberality!" exclaims Pope Innocent III.; "God accepts from us as a gift what He grants to us as a gift; for the same sacrifices are gifts and presents—gifts offered by us, presents vouchsafed to us†." Every commemoration of a saint was a fresh prayer that the efficacy of our Saviour's Passion might be extended to us, as in the ancient prose of St. George, in the Liturgy of the Monastery of Georgenthal, ending with the words referring to Christ—

"Hic nos salvet à peccatis,
Ut in cœlo cum beatis
Possimus quiescere‡."

"From this most sacred Passion," says St. Bonaventura, "all the ecclesiastical sacraments draw their virtue, which are the salutary remedies for all spiritual diseases. This most blessed Passion is also for us that Davidic key which opens and no one shuts, shuts and no one opens; for without this it is impossible to understand the Scriptures; and this once impressed upon the

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* Par. 13.

† De Sac. Alt. Mysterio, lib. iii. 3.

‡ Thuringia Sacra, 677.

mind, all things become clear*." Then in another place he says,—

"Passio debilitat, spoliat, informat, honorat,
Excitat, inflammat, reparat, pacem dat et armat,
Sana vivificat, ducit, dulcorat, obumbrat,
A culpa revocat, reserat, illuminat, ornat."

"The Passion weakens," he proceeds to show, "the demon, spoils hell, instructs by example, honours its imitators, excites to the spiritual combat, inflames to love, arms against the world, the flesh, and the devil, heals the mind, vivifies, guides through the sea of this world, sweetens its waters with the wood, overshadows, recalls from sin, unbars heaven's gates, enlightens man, and adorns those who take refuge in it†." D'Avila, following St. Bernard, says, "that to have the testimony of a good conscience it is not sufficient to believe in general that sins are pardoned by the death of Christ; but that one must have confidence that this pardon is applied particularly to one's self, according to the disposition which the Church teaches‡." In like manner Pope Innocent III., treating on the mysteries of the holy mass, invites men by the same assurance, saying, "Non enim per aliam viam ad nos eterna Dei beneficia possunt devenire, quam per eum qui est mediator Dei et hominum, homo Christus Jesus; sicut per mediantem cristallum mutuamus ignem, in escam suppositam in sole longinquo§." John of Alvernia, saying mass, beheld an almost infinite number of souls, like sparks from a furnace, flying to the celestial country—propter merita Christi, qui pro humana salute in cruce pependit‖. The great mystic writers of Catholicity hold forth the same branch to entice all wanderers to the centre. The prayers of St. Gertrude are all expressive of her sole trust in the Passion of Christ¶. "Bone Jesu," she exclaims, "omnes iniquitates et peccata mea demergo in abyssum misericordiæ tuæ et in cruenta vulnera tua. I know, O God," she continues, "that were I to be judged according to merits of my own, I could expect no grace, but only punishment. Not in my merits, but in the copious merits of thy only Son, I place my trust. As often as I draw my breath I will offer to thee, O Lord God, my Creator, the life, Passion, and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ." And again in her testamentum animæ she expresses the same desire, saying, "Agnosco et profiteor me per propria merita cœlum

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* Stim. Div. Amoris, p. i. c. 12.

† Compend. Theolog. Verit. iii. 20.

‡ Œuvres Spirit.

§ De Sacro Altar. Myst. lib. ii. 25.

‖ Joan. Major, Magnum Spec. 196.

¶ Preces Gertrudianæ, p. v., de Passione.

adipisci non posse; unde nec in iisdem, sed in meritis atque passione dilecti Filii tui, sanctorumque patrociniis confido." In the deep heart of mediæval Spain, the same consoling voice is heard. Marina de Escobar shows repeatedly how all gifts and graces are distributed to men by the merits of Jesus Christ*. "On one occasion," she says, "I beheld in vision a certain fountain made by angels, whence water flowed over my bed, and to which many angels, with holy virgins and martyrs, came and drew water; which from the numbers that came and returned seemed to be inexhaustible. Then I was told that this was a figure and symbol of the Catholic Church, which is full of the merits of the blood of Jesus Christ; and that the angels thus draw merits and distribute them to the faithful, whom they dispose to receive that virtue of the merits of Christ Jesus by the holy sacraments†. The divine intention of his mercies was manifested to me," she says, "a month later, in the following vision. I was in Palestine, when I saw certain Cœnobites washing themselves in a mystic river of blood and water. Many infidels watched and mocked them, saying, 'See these miserable monks who wash in blood.' But others said, 'Nay, but they come out of the bath most pure: see how they shine translucid‡.'" Another time she beheld herself clothed by angels in a garment died in the blood of our divine Saviour; and then she says, "No tongue could express the effects which my soul experienced from that vestment, which was an application to it of the precious blood of our Lord and of his merits§." In fine, all this view of the grounds and character of hope, descending to impart new life to men exhausted and fainting on this road, is expressed by Sayrus, the English monk of Mount Cassino, in his meditations on the Psalm Miserere; for he speaks as follows:—"O quanta est virtus hujus verbi miserere! It is as if we said, 'O Domine, agnosco culpam meam; fugio ad misericordiam secundum magnam misericordiam tuam.' I do not ask secundum meritum meum, sive justitiam meam, aut fidem meam, aut opera mea quibus ego peccator in omnibus deviavi a te‖."

Such, then, is the avenue to Catholicity by its doctrine of grace. From the same point there is an issue to it no less clear in the practical mercy with which the Church invites and receives sinners.

"Most pernicious and contrary to all sound views of morality," says the world, "is the favour which profligate men of all kinds seem to enjoy under the Popish system." Undoubtedly there

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* Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, p. ii. lib. ii. c. 7.

† P. i. lib. vi. c. 13.

‡ P. ii. lib. ii. c. 13.

§ P. ii. lib. ii. c. 32.

‖ D. Gattula, Hist. Cassinens. lib. x. 763.

is something in it contrary to unrevealed views of justice, and to mere human notions of expediency and prudence. According to many admired teachers of our day, the bad man is unimprovable, irreclaimable. If he be hastening to perdition, the road should be cleared for him; if he choose to take the road of the devil, he should be sent to him with all dispatch. But, if these grim moralists who follow pride take alarm at indulgences, confessions, and absolutions, they must endure to be told that the Catholic Church maintains, and proves by deeds and facts, that these are not her inventions, but the remedies and ordinations of her divine Founder. Respecting the extent of his mercy, Catholicism supposes that there can be no question. At all events, transgressors know instinctively that it is not the Catholic faith which ignores or limits it. "O my God!" exclaims St. Augustin, "I venture to say, and thou wilt pardon the holy delirium caused by thy great goodness, that if thou wert not God, thou wouldst be unjust; for we sin grievously—we love sin, we rejoice in sin, and thou dost not punish, thou only makest use of mercy*." If Catholicism were not divine, but a mere philosophy of man's invention, there would unquestionably be in its whole system of reconciliation a fair and spacious field for alarm and reproof. Indeed, in that case we may even admit, that its influence would be incompatible with the existence of human society; but the Church, whatever they may please to say, is the institution of God, who invests her with power commensurate with her object, as history and experience prove, and she knows and demonstrates her origin to be from God, who "so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, and sent Him, not to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

While heresy pretends an irreversible decree consigning some souls without demerit of their own to everlasting destruction, and the world's philosophy, always more or less allied with it, is saying, "there are some souls that really do not seem worth saving†," Catholicism alone proclaims that God wishes, and consequently permits, all men to be saved; that the ordinary means supplied by the Church are adequate, and that, even where these seem lost, others are provided by Him who has what the school terms the knowledge of conditionals, which fact might be expressed even in Homeric language, by the words,

'Ρεῖα θεός γ' ἐθέλων καὶ τηλόθεν ἄνδρα σαῶσαι‡.

"That abyss of infinite mercy," says Henry Suso, "is not even to all the saints, who are perfected, investigable or known§."

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* Ap. Rogacci, L'Art de traiter avec Dieu.

† Cited by Southey in the "Doctor."

‡ Od. iii. 331.

§ Dialog. c. 5.

"The Son of God," says Antonio de Guevara, "confideth his body to his secret disciples, to teach us that there are many men and women in the Church who are secret and unknown. He who should have seen wicked Judas and good Joseph, the one an open disciple, the other unknown to the holy college, would have judged Judas to be a holy man and Joseph scarce a Christian; but, when Christ had need of them, the secret disciple did bury him,—and the open disciple did sell him." Marina de Escobar, expressing surprise to find that a certain soul had escaped damnation, heard these words—"Think not that I so easily permit souls to perish. I died for them; and they cost me much; and much is required for the damnation of a soul. Think not that those who die without the sacraments are lost; and then," she says, "I was greatly exhilarated by these divine words. Blessed for ever be God *." Oh! 'tis not a common sorrow, when mortals fall and paradise is lost. Catholicism reveals God seated on the throne of patience and of mercy. God is loved by the nine orders of blessed spirits for the perfections corresponding to their state, by the dominations on account of that most placid will, which though dominant every where in the strength of his arm, yet by a more powerful virtue, through his eternal gentleness and imperturbable tranquillity, disposes all things with sweetness; and by the thrones on account of the benevolence of his surpassing wisdom communicating itself without envy †. What is to be understood by that sitting as of God in thrones? The profoundest tranquillity; the most placid serenity; a peace which passeth all understanding. Such is He who sits in thrones, the Lord of Sabaoth, judging all things with tranquillity, most placid, most serene, most pacific ‡. St. Ambrose says that God places his bow in the cloud, but not the arrow. "It is not the bow," he adds, "which wounds, but the arrow; and therefore He places the bow rather than the arrow to indicate that He would not wound, but only threaten §." In awful conjunction with justice are indeed these great attributes of love; so that even the supreme plans of mercy are shown to be not exclusive of it, as when Suso in vision beheld a ruined city of most wicked men, and, hearing a great cry, received for answer to his inquiry, This miserable groan and clamour are nothing else but a signification that the death of Christ begins to emit a voice which will never cease crying against them ||. Salvien recognizes this cry in the judgments on the falling empire: "If living in such vices," he says, "we were to be prosperous

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* Vit. Virg. Marinæ, &c. p. i. lib. v. c. 5.

† De la Cerda, De Excellentia Cœlest. Spirit. c. 6.

‡ S. Bernard. § Lib. de Noe, c. 72.

|| Dialog. c. 6.

and happy, one might suppose that God did not regard the wickedness of the Romans, but in our calamity it is clear that we are judged *."

Most strictly wise, indeed, and conformable to pure intelligence, is declared to be the doom of those who do not avail themselves of offered grace, as when Mary de Oignies acquiesced in the judgment passed upon her own mother, miraculously revealed to her,—" quia ratio intellectualis animæ quam solus creavit Omnipotens, judici universorum Deo subdita concordabat †." Of the just Judge Satan himself can be therefore represented saying,—

> ——— " Him, after all disputes,
> Forced I absolve : all my evasions vain,
> And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still
> But to my own conviction."

" A certain lord," says St. Bridget, " cruel and unjust, and unwilling to make restitution, heard in his prayers a voice as of an angel, saying, ' Urse, urse ; you are too bold against God and justice, for your will conquers your conscience within you, so that your conscience is altogether silent, and your will speaks and works ; therefore quickly shall you be called to judgment, and then your will shall keep silence and your conscience will speak, and you will yourself judge just judgment against yourself ‡.'" When all is not discerned men are reminded that, as in the case of mercy so also in that of justice, the knowledge of conditions, scientia conditionalium, which would complete the proof that both can be exercised in a way beyond our comprehension, can only be in God, for this is the knowledge by which He knows not only what I do, but what I would do under all circumstances ; what I would do if I were a king or judge, a general, under every possible variety of condition, place, or time ; and because circumstances are infinite, the combinations of human things infinite, it is clear that this must be an infinite knowledge which can fully discern the causes of the divine judgment. Enough to know that God is just §. " The judgments of God," says the Père Rogacci, " are regarded therefore by the servants of God as a theme of rejoicing rather than of terror, as may be witnessed in the words of David,—' Quia judicia tua jucunda ; et in judiciis tuis supersperavi ; et memor fui judiciorum tuorum à sæculo, et consolatus sum ||.'" The justice of God is therefore presented on the road that attracts those whom

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* De Guber. Dei, lib. iv. † Magnum Speculum, 68.

‡ Rev. S. Birgit. lib. iv. c. 46.

§ Alf. Antonio de Sarasa, Ars semper gaudendi, t. xvi. 1.

|| L'Art de traiter avec Dieu, p. 195.

the Church so lovingly calls poor sinners; but not the less does Catholicity proclaim the certainty of God's inexhaustible and incomprehensible love, mercy, and forgiveness, for all who turn to Him. "Creator piissimus," says Cæsarius, "qui odit culpam et diligit naturam," when he sees youth contrite averts from it confusion; and after all, had it been otherwise, the Church would never have existed; since, as St. Augustin says, "Si peccatores Deus non amaret, de cœlo ad terram non descenderet *." Such representations of the Supreme Almighty Power draw then souls to the source from which they issue, as when the reality was seen on earth, and Magdalen with her tears watered the feet of Jesus. "It must be remarked," says the Père de Ligny, "that Jesus was constantly cherished by sinners and hated by rigourists †." The Catholic Church participates in the reception He experienced, her office being to encourage, to bind up, to heal, and to restore, after the example of Him whom she invokes, "whose immense goodness has neither beginning nor bounds," which she describes in her solemn prayer in the office of reconciling a church, when she says,—"Qui divina naturalique pietate plenus eligis in nobis magis restituere perdita quam percutere peritura. Et si quid aut negligentia polluit, aut ira committit, aut stimulat ebrietas, aut libido subvertit, hoc, Domine, clementi patientiâ sustines, ut ante per gratiam purifices quam percutias per furorem. Et operis tui providus plasmator eligis potius erigere jacentia quam punire damnanda ‡." True, there are canons, and discipline, and penance, and warnings after all are accomplished, in the Church :—

"There is a law in each well-order'd nation
To curb those raging appetites that are
Most disobedient and refractory;"

but here the very trees around us can be cited to silence all unreasonable complaints; for they would remind us that in the administration of forests the parts which contain a young offspring, supplying the place of what has been felled, must be put, as the old French law says, "en défends," that is, the entrance of beasts must be forbidden till the slips grow so high as to be out of danger. Nature herself, indeed, has in one instance protected thus, as by a law, one family of the forest; for mark this holly-tree—

"The eye that contemplates it well perceives its glossy leaves
Order'd by an Intelligence so wise
As might confound the atheist's sophistries;"

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* Tract. 49 in Joan.

† Hist. de J. C. 123.

‡ Pont. Rom. de Reconcil. Eccles.

for below, observes the poet, its prickly leaves are seen wrinkled and sharp, so that no cattle can reach to wound it,—

> "But as they grow where nothing is to fear,
> Smooth and unarm'd their pointless leaves appear."

Thus, though the Catholic civilization requires defensive discipline for the young, which to some may seem harsh and austere, reserved and rude, yet, where no danger is,—

> "Gentle and mild it causes them to be,
> Like the high leaves upon the holly-tree."

To "dishonour" trees, as foresters say, by removing the bark round them, or cutting off branches, or kindling fires near, so as to scorch them, or charming them, is an offence punishable by the old French laws, the penalty being in proprtion to the class of the tree. If an oak, chesnut, or fruit tree was so injured, the fine was heaviest, being four francs for every foot round it. If it were a beech, elm, lime, fir, willow, or ash, fifty sous were to be paid for each foot in the circumference; and for injuring any other kind of tree the fine was thirty sous, multiplied by the same measure. The woods even of private persons were formerly under the protection of the law. No one who had a wood in France, within ten leagues of the sea or two leagues of a navigable river, could sell or cut it down without giving six months' notice to the contrôleur-général, under pain of a fine of 3000 francs, and confiscation of the timber felled. The state, for its own purposes, seeks thus to protect the trees of the natural forest; but the Church, without any interested view, desires to defend her own precious plants, for which she holds herself responsible. St. Augustin says of man, that generally, "factor legis debet esse, non judex *." But some will criticise and condemn every measure of restraint. Plato says, that "if the most abominable crimes be forbidden, such as cannot be named, some will exclaim immediately with insolence, that we require things by law irrational and impossible, *ὡς ἀνόητα καὶ ἀδύνατα τιθέντων νόμιμα*; for, he adds, "we have come to this state of progress that we hold abstinence from such crimes as impossible—*ἀλλὰ γὰρ εἰς τοῦτο προβέβηκε νῦν ὥστ' οὐδ' ἂν ποτε γενέσθαι δοκῇ* †. Yet we see proof that in the Catholic civilization the complaints were caused by the remissness rather than by the severity of the ecclesiastical power in restraining vice; for Stowe expressly says, "that in the year 1383, the seventh of Richard II., the citizens of London took upon themselves to punish immorality, making no distinctions between men or

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* Confess. xiii. 23.

† De Legibus, lib. viii.

women, inflicting on all alike infamous punishments, shaving their heads, and proclaiming them before the public, saying that they would themselves purge their city from such filthiness, lest through God's vengeance either the pestilence or the sword should happen to them, or that the earth should swallow them." Catholicism therefore unquestionably involves measures of repression and of preservation; but even in regard to its punishment of criminals the spirit of its practice can attract transgressors and form an avenue for them, through which they can be drawn to truth. Ives de Chartres denounces the false morality which scorns the example of Raab, who is not repulsed from Sion. "Those," he says, "whom we transfer from turpitude to honesty, from the city of the devil to the city of God, some people, by their system of severity, would compel to return from honesty to turpitude, and from the city of God to the city of the devil. Some things are to be ascribed to the rigour of discipline,—sed ubi salus periclitatur, moderatione legum saluti intelligimus consulendum *." St. Augustin speaks in the same sense: "the Lord said what the meek and just ought to say, 'Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.' This is the voice of justice—puniatur peccatrix sed non à peccatore. Impleatur lex sed non à prævaricatoribus legis." The Church invests even common judicial penalty with the sanctity and dignity of penance. By the ecclesiastical discipline in the fourth century, for the crime of homicide a penance of twenty years was imposed. According to the rule of St. Basil, the periods were distinguished as four years a mourner, five a hearer, seven in a prostrate and four in a standing state. St. Paulinus writes to Heistulf, who had murdered his wife for having committed adultery, admonishing him of the tremendous judgment of God. Still, as God willeth not the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and may live, he calls on him to have pity on his own soul; therefore he says, "Murderer, we ask of you to leave this malignant world which instigated you to such a prodigious crime. Enter a monastery, humble yourself under the hand of the abbot, and gain the help of the prayers of the brethren. Observe with simplicity whatever may be enjoined, if perchance God may be moved to refresh your soul before you fall into the eternal flames; but, if you prefer remaining in your house as a public penitent, hear the state in which you must continue till your death. You must never again taste wine or any strong drink, nor flesh meat, excepting on the two days of Christmas and Easter. On all others you must fast on bread and water, and salt. You must never again wear arms, nor presume to litigate, nor to marry, nor to use a bath, nor assist at an entertainment. In the church

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* Ivon. Carnot, epist. 188.

you must keep yourself separate from other Christians at the door, and commend yourself to the prayers of those who enter and go out; and never again receive the holy communion, excepting in the way of viaticum at your death. If you persevere thus with a perfect heart, we trust that you may obtain remission of your sins through his blood who has given power to his Church on earth to loose such bonds*." At the solemn office of the reconciliation of penitents on Maundy Thursday, we hear sung aloud the words, " Vivo ego, dicit Dominus; nolo mortem peccatoris, sed ut magis convertatur, et vivat." The public penitent's attire, answering to the prison dress of modern times, was solemnly blessed with a prayer that it might be sanctified—" ut quicumque eo pro peccatis suis indutus fuerit, et misericordiam tuam imploraverit, veniam et indulgentiam tuæ sanctæ misericordiæ consequatur †." What pity and tenderness has the Holy See ever shown to criminals, while secular governments, as in France and England, would even interfere to prevent their receiving spiritual consolations at their death.

Clement VIII. gave proof of the sensibility which Catholicism produces, on the day when the Cenci were executed. He absented himself from Rome. Three cannon-shots were to announce the moment when the three guilty heads were about to fall under the sword of justice. The victims knew that the pontiff was at that moment to extend his arm to grant them the apostolic indulgence for those at the article of death. The act of paternal charity accomplished, Clement VIII. fell senseless in the arms of the attending prelates. In Italy it was the Prior of the Confraternity of the Decollation of St. John the Baptist who announced the sentence of death to criminals, exhorting them to conform to the justice of God and to receive death in a spirit of penance. Hear how the sodality of the Florentines and Tuscans to assist condemned criminals is described. " The day before execution it sends some of the members, very often of the prime gentlemen, to the prison, where the culprit receives not the sentence till these be present. He after this commonly falls down before them on the ground immediately, howling and beating himself, almost distracted, and, as it were tortured with the thoughts of punishment, denies the fact, beseeches the judge, and, knowing not what to do or say, like a foolish man imputes the justice he hath deserved either to some fate of the stars or blasphemously chargeth God with what his sins have brought on him. The brethren of the sodality begin with gentle words to persuade the miserable creature, yea, they take him up lovingly in their arms, and, embracing him, exhort him to patience and

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* S. Paulini Epist. ad Heistulf.

† De Expulsione publice Pœnitentium.

with many arguments out of the Christian religion, as that God Himself for his sake became man, and endured all the miseries of human nature; and, though He hath committed no offence, yet refused not to suffer death upon the cross; that he, on the contrary, was guilty of many crimes, and deserved death before God; and so they go on suggesting these and such other things, whereby desperate minds are brought to a sounder temper, till at last he come to confess his faults, and being truly contrite be reconciled to God. The whole day and night are spent in divine exhortations. The next morning mass is said, and the prisoner receiveth the communion. Then being led forth, the sodality, going two by two before him, recite prayers. The two who had spent the night with him calming his mind, taking him now in the middle between them, and so supporting him with their shoulders and arms, lead him on, consoling him, and saying that many have passed that way to life everlasting. Execution being done, they return home two by two in silence, but return again in the same order before night, and nobly with their own hands cut that infamous rope, and so laying the corpse upon a bier carry it to a funeral solemnity to the church of the sodality, dedicated to St. John the Beheaded *." Criminals may remember, and often do almost instinctively feel that Catholicism is always a representative and a propagator of the spirit that intercedes for those whose sin can be ascribed to the judgment rather than to the heart, as when our Saviour received with such benignity all but the selfish. Fortunatus relates, that St. Germain, bishop of Paris, one day returning from St. Symphorien of Autun, passed by a castle in which were many men confined in prison for some act of disobedience or neglect of payment. Being invited to dinner by Nicaise, the governor, he began to speak of mercy, interceding for the prisoners; but the count, who was obstinate, remaining unmoved, the saint left the table before dinner was over, and proceeded to visit the prisoners in their dungeons under ground, and to pray for them, promising them speedy deliverance. While the world and its favourite guides are more or less influenced by the spirit of that reply to the penitent profligate offering to return, which said, " Nor are you to entertain any hope of ever gaining pardon by weeping, unless you are prepared to fare upon bread and water in the lowest dungeon of the castle, until your hair shall outgrow eagles' feathers, and your nails the talons of a vulture," compassion and forgiveness—compassion for sinners overtaken by punishment—belongs essentially to the Catholic religion. That religion never turns braggart and parades its unobtrusive virtues to the glare of admiration; but it has burst open the doors of

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* Theodorus Amyderius, Pietas Romana.

prisons; it has cancelled death-warrants and shortened many a frightful perpetuity in the galleys. Into wounds beyond all power to heal it has at least poured soothing balsam; it has hurled mighty villains to the earth; and oft with the tears of a mother saved repenting guilt from impending ruin. Do you ask for proof? The history of the Church, the lives of the saints are full of it. One of the traits of youthful piety in St. Felix of Valois is his imploring Theobald IV., count of Champagne, his uncle, to pardon a criminal whom they happened to meet as the guards were escorting him to the scaffold *. It is only the spirit of the Catholic religion, in fact, which the poet, often hostile to it, teaches in the lines—

> " Comme une aumone, enfant, donne donc ta prière
> Donne au pauvre, à la veuve, au crime, au vice immonde
> Fais en priant le tour des misères du monde."

It is " the venerable and discreet person," brother Pierre Ferget, of the order of the Augustins of Lyons, who translates from Latin into French—" le livre nomme la consolation des poures pecheurs, faict par maniere de proces entre Belial procureur d'enfer et Jesus fils de la Vierge Marie, redempteur de nature humaine." Such is the style of Catholic discretion in regard to those whom human laws are constrained to punish. In the lives of the Fathers one of the seniors says, " If you see any one sinning, do not fix the blame on him, but on the person who accuseth him, and say to yourself, Woe is me; for as this man is conquered against his will, so I may be to-morrow; and weep and ask the consolation of God; for no one wishes to sin, but we are all deceived when we sin—nemo enim vult peccare, sed omnes decipimur †. Very delicate and noble is the language of Catholicism respecting those who succumb to the temptation from which it incessantly seeks to deliver them. The boy who brought provisions to the blessed hermit Walaricus, being in habits of retaining a part for himself, the holy man, knowing what he did, said to him, " Sed tu, fili, hoc prævide, ne quid incaute sumpseris de illo pane vel flascone ‡." He calls theft an imprudence. St. Gertrude prays and repeats the Pater noster for the dead who did not love God nor show Him honour, but cast Him from their hearts §. St. Francis of Assisi speaks as follows to the vicar brother Elias. " In this will appear if you be the servant of God, if you lead back mercifully an erring brother to God, and if you do not cease to love him who grievously errs." He writes to the minister-general of the whole order

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* Baron. Annales Ord. SS. Trinit. xxxviii.

† De Vit. SS. Pat. Append.

‡ Spec. Mag. 345.

§ Preces Gertrudianæ, p. viii.

exhorting him to exercise patience towards all who might be an obstacle to him, and to take all well and gratefully. "Love them," he says, "I beseech you, and wish that they may be better Christians. By this I shall know whether you love the Lord and me, his servant and yours; if there should be no brother in the world who has sinned, however greatly, and who after he sees your eyes, may not depart without your mercy; and if he should appear a thousand times before you, you must love him and lead him to good, and have pity on him; and the other brothers who know that he has sinned may not speak evil of him, nor cause him shame, but have mercy on him and conceal his fault *."

"As there was no discord in the ark," says St. Bruno, "so they are not of the Church, though they may seem to be in it, who hate their brethren and loose the bonds of charity †." "What hope," he exclaims, "what joy to read, 'Ecce omne peccatum et omnis blasphemia dimittetur hominibus.' The Lord says this. Doubt it not. One only sin will not be forgiven. What is that? To persevere in malice, and therefore to despair of mercy ‡." In an old mystery, a neighbour says, "Nous devons comme l'escriture le porte vouloir de toute creature le sauvement." Such is the Catholic spirit in regard to every transgressor; the Church watches his wanderings as a friend's disease, saying to him, in the words of St. Ephrem, "Have you welcomed sin? then you admitted a villain and expelled a saint; you have hated a king and loved a tyrant §." "At Bologna, in our times," says Valery, "a certain man was accused of blasphemy. The inquisitor, Father Medici, a Dominican, invited him to dinner, and on rising from table took him aside and gave him some charitable advice ||." St. Francis ordered his friars to take good bread and wine to give to certain robbers in a wood, and bade them salute them, saying, "Fratres latrones, venite ad nos. Serve them humbly," he added, "and joyfully, and, when they have eaten, propose something of the words of the Lord, and beg of them to hurt no one; and in the end you may gain their souls ¶." St. Martin, when the demon accused him of receiving great criminals, hesitated not to promise to the deceiver himself forgiveness if he would repent; which Fortunatus relates in the lines beginning,—

> "Perfidus, horribilis, trux, lubricus, invidus anguis,
> Ore cruentatus Martinum provocat armis,
> Cur habeat monachos oneroso crimine pressos."

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* Opuscul. B. Francisci, Epist. 8.

† S. Brun. de Laudib. Eccles.

‡ S. Brun. de Ornatu Eccles.

§ De Virginit.

|| Curiosités et Anecdot. Italiennes.

¶ Spec. Vitæ, s. 6. cap. 49.

To whom the saint replied:

"Perfide, desipiens, quia non tua commoda cernis!
Si nunc pœniteas, si nunc resipiscere velles,
De pietate Dei fidens promittere possim
Ut tibi tam misero misereri Christus haberet *."

But, having now observed in general the speculative and practical mildness and mercy of the Catholic Church in receiving sinners, which may be said to form an issue to her through the forest of life, where every antagonistic system adopts the rigour of a heathen legislator and the manners of a serjeant of the police, let us proceed a little further to another opening effected by her positive especial institutions for recovering those who are lost in this part of the wood, and grown wild in it like savage animals, and mark how she actually catches them, for their present and eternal welfare, in her strong toil of grace.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ROAD OF PENITENTS.

THE woods abound with remedies for many of the evils of human nature. In the dense Quina-yielding forests of Loxa the beautiful tree, which furnishes the precious bark, seems always to aspire to rise above its neighbours. As its upper branches wave to and fro in the wind, their red and shining foliage produces a strange and peculiar effect, recognizable from a great distance. The Indians in search of it are often seen climbing up into other trees, in order to discover in what direction they should direct their steps through the woods. Without leaving our European forests, we know that on all sides are found medicinal trees and plants, whose leaves, or flowers, or fruits, or gums, or bark, or roots, are applied to some purpose of healing or assuaging pain. Boerhaave, the great physician, is said to have regarded the elder with such reverence for its medicinal virtues, that he sometimes took off his hat in passing a tree of this species. Every roving little wanderer knows that by the side of the plant that stings can be found growing the leaf that cools and assuages pain. So the forest itself presents an analogy to prepare us for

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* Mag. Spec. 576.

observing the remedies for moral evil which are provided by Catholicity for the human race.

"The author of nature," says Butler, "permits evil, but then He has provided reliefs, and, in many cases, perfect remedies for it after some pains and difficulties—reliefs and remedies even for that evil which is the fruit of our own misconduct, and which, in the course of nature, would have continued and ended in destruction but for such remedies. And this is an instance of severity and indulgence in the constitution of nature. Now suppose it had been so constituted that, after such actions were done as were foreseen naturally to draw after them misery to the doer, it should have been no more in human power to have prevented that naturally consequent misery in any instance than it is in all, no one can say whether such a more severe constitution of things might not yet have been really good. But, that, on the contrary, provision is made by nature, that we may and do, to so great degree, prevent the bad natural effects of our follies, this may be called mercy or compassion in the original constitution of the world; compassion, as distinguished from goodness in general. And, the whole known constitution and course of things affording us instances of such compassion, it would be according to the analogy of nature to hope, that however ruinous the natural consequences of vice might be, from the general laws of God's government over the universe, yet provision might be made—possibly might have been originally made—for preventing these ruinous consequences from inevitably following, at least from following universally and in all cases*." In the curious mediæval book which we have before met with upon other roads, the contrast between such views, and the wisdom of the world opposed to Catholicity, is presented by Aristotle, acting as one of the arbiters between Christ and Belial, who gives this sentence: "Je dis selon mon advis que tous les mauvais et pecheurs soient donnez a enfer et que tous les bons vertueux et perfaicts hommes soyent donnez a Jhesus Crist." Then answered Jeremias: "Saulve la reverence dun si grant docteur me semble que ne seroit pas bien arbitre ce quavez propose. Car cest quasi contre nature que lon treuve ung homme sans peche. Aussi demonstre saincte theologue que lomme depuis son adolescence est enclin a mal—et si se fasoit comme vous avez dit, la partie de Jhesu Crist seroit bien petite; car tout le monde cest ascavoir tous hommes et femme seroient a la congregacion infernalle veu que cest chose commune de pecher†." But where is to be found the remedy for moral evil and for a perverted will? The greatest philosophers of the ancient world confess themselves unable to discover it. Cicero

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* II. 5.

† F. 173.

says of the crew of Catiline, "Horum ego faces eripere de manibus et gladios extorquere potui sicut feci; voluntates vero consceleratas ac nefarias nec sanare potui, nec tollere*." In fact, the road on which we are now entered, which leads to where it is gathered, was unknown to the Gentiles; and no one should wonder therefore that they were unable to reach the object that we have in view. One may, however, reasonably testify surprise on observing that, after the remedy had been discovered and made known to the whole world, on evidence that might have been thought irresistible, there should be persons who endeavour to depreciate its value, and to prevent its being made use of for the benefit of men and of nations. If you will listen to the old popular herbalists, the forest has an emblem of such malice; for in it grows a tall blue flower, called in their language Devil's bit, for the reason that its root can never be found when the stem is drawn out of the ground. This root was said to be endued with great medicinal power, and the circumstance of its being always found, when pulled by the hand, as if snapt abruptly off, gave rise to the name; for it was thought that the enemy of man, through envy, took care thus to deprive him of the benefit provided. Thus do his satellites endeavour always to suppress or bite off the holy medicinal ramifications which would secure the health or the recovery of souls. What is more hateful to many than confession and the conversion of sinners? "Mira abusio; domus ardet; ignis instat à tergo, et fugienti prohibetur egredi, evadenti suadetur regredi." Here again the forest traditions can supply an analogy; for "it is hardly necessary to remark," says Humboldt, "that in the long controversy which ensued respecting the good or bad effects of the fever bark, the Protestant physicians sometimes permitted themselves to be influenced by religious intolerance and dislike of the Jesuits†." In regard to the great remedies for the spiritual maladies of our nature which are supplied by the Catholic church, Protestant moralists follow the example of Protestant physicians rejecting the bark. Heresy, moreover, acts like one that is described by Spenser:—

> "So much her malice did her might surpas
> That even th' Almightie selfe she did maligne;
> Because to man so mercifull he was,
> For all this world's faire workmanship she tride
> Unto his last confusion to bring,
> And that great golden chaine quite to divide,
> With which it blessed Concord hath together tide."

Even where such artificial prejudices do not exist, there are

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* Pro P. Sulla.

† Aspects of Nature.

natural causes which render poor unhappy men unwilling to make use of what would secure their best treasure. "Heu! mundus plenus est foveis!" exclaims St. Bonaventura, "et heu, in fovea diutius relinquit homo animam suam quam ovem*!" It is not merely in an empty pit that he leaves his soul and manhood when fallen headlong; he leaves it confronted at the bottom with a cruel monster to be torn and devoured by it, like that unhappy naturalist from Scotland, who fell into a trap in the American forest into which a wild bull had previously fallen, of whose fury he became the helpless prey.

Let us proceed, however, to observe that the desire to escape from moral evil, with which perhaps all men, at some period or other of their lives, are, at least for fugitive moments, visited, can supply an issue through the dense wilderness of a sinful life to the Catholic Church; and so, leaving now the observation of what has caused their misery, let us advance towards the central truth which declares what are the means by which they can be delivered from it; for, as St. Augustin says, "it skills not to ask how we fell, no more than if we had fallen into a pit; but the question for us is the same as that which would press upon us if we were in such a position—namely, how we can get out and attain to safety†." Isaias heard from the Lord: "Sume tibi librum grandem, et scribe in eo stilo hominis, velociter spolia detrahe, cito prædare." "That great book," adds St. Bruno, "is the whole world, of which there are as many leaves as men. It is written in the style of a man, that is, clearly, and after the common manner of men, so that all can understand it. And what is written? 'Velociter spolia detrahe, cito prædare.' How few words and how vast a book! Yet these suffice if any one will keep them. We are taught by them to spoil and to rob; but it is only to recover our own that had been robbed, when we went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. We shall gain good spoils if we deliver our members from servitude, and rob back our souls from the hands of the enemy‡." "Ecclesia," says the Venerable Bede, "non solum parit filios, sed etiam, si forte declinaverint à viâ, iterum parturit." Christ was anointed, as He said Himself, to preach indulgence to captives and deliverance to the bound. "This," adds Savonarola, "did Jesus expressly, and this daily does his Church§." "At any age," says Fulbert, "at any season, a man will have indulgence for all his sins if he does penance, et si toto corde renunciaverit peccatis præteritis‖." The words,

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* De S. Pet. et Paul. Serm. ii.

† Epist. xxix. ad Hieron.

‡ S. Brun. de Nativitate Domini.

§ De Veritate Fidei Christianæ.

‖ Fulb. Carnot. Epist. xxxiv.

toto corde, may sound discouraging, but with God all things are possible. "Let him hear sermons," says Thomas of Villanova, "let him hear the inspirations of God, let him hear the voices of the cataracts calling him to God[*];" then he will secure his deliverance and disappoint his enemy,—

—— "fatis contraria fata rependens[†];"

then he will be able to defy the hideous escort that had hitherto accompanied him during many years perhaps. "With that dragon," says St. Bruno, "all can now play. How many robbers, harlots, adulterers, and murderers daily play with him and mock him, whom he had previously devoured and swallowed; but, when they were moved to penitence, they burst from his impious jaws, and left him empty[‡]." Henry VI. being murdered in the Tower on the same night when King Edward came to London, the Croyland continuator, after relating how his bleeding corpse was buried in the monastery of Chertsey-upon-Thames, concludes his tragic narrative with these words, alluding to such supernatural recoveries: "May God grant time for repentance to the person, whoever he was, who laid his sacrilegious hands thus on the Lord's anointed." Have you ever now remarked, companion, the novelty, the prodigious contrast presented in such promises, and such prayers, when you consider the ancient or the modern civilization as existing without faith? Have you ever contrasted the Catholic wish that sinners, murderers, usurpers, may repent and be for ever happy, with the prayer of Homer's Minerva,—

Ὡς ἀπόλοιτο καὶ ἄλλος ὅ τις τοιαῦτά γε ῥέζοι[§];

or with the words of the gentle and humane Cicero, desiring that the guilty may despair,—"numquam ego sanguinem expetivi tuum; numquam illud extremum, quod posset esse improbis et probis commune, supplicium legis ac judicii; sed abjectum, contemptum, despectum à ceteris, à te ipso desperatum et relictum—sine voce, sine libertate, horrentem, trementem, adulantem omnes, videre te volui, vidi[||]?" Oh, what a wish! oh, what a fulfilment to boast of! Christ has created man afresh. There is nothing more certain. But let us advance, and mark how Catholicity proclaims and provides escape, deliverance, and restitution of all former happiness, thereby attracting poor lost wanderers to the Church, and through glorious avenues revealing its divine truth. It is a common defiance addressed to the

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[*] Dom. xix. post Pent.

[†] Æn. i. 239.

[‡] S. Brun. de Nativ. B. Mariæ, 13.

[§] Od. i. 47.

[||] In L. Pisonem.

Catholic Church to say, in words like those of Ajax, " You are mad if you think that you can change my character now:"

μῶρά μοι δοκεῖς φρονεῖν,
εἰ τοὐμὸν ἦθος ἄρτι παιδεύειν νοεῖς[*].

And, notwithstanding the force of the considerations on which such confidence rests, it is as common to hear proof that the security was false, and the madness justified by success. In one day you deem impossible a change! Yet nature herself should make you pause; " for in one day," replies Calderon, " the sun lightens the world and disappears; in one day a state may be overthrown; in a day stones may become an edifice; in a day a battle is lost or won; in a day the sea is tempest-tossed and calm; in a day a man is born, in a day he dies[†]." Why may we not then in a day be won for God? That there is an avenue mystically formed in the Catholic Church from the ways of dissimilitude in an ineffable manner, by the invisible power unclothed even with any external or sacramental form of divine grace, all history and experience sufficiently attest. Hugo of St. Victor sees an image of the effect in the hawk, described in Job as expanding its wings to the south[‡]; which, he says, " represents the soul submitting to the warmth of divine grace[§]." And, in fact, we shall see how often the young noble of the middle ages, who might have been described, as was Mirabeau by his own father, " Oiseau hagard, dont le nid fut entre quatre tourelles," became an example of the grace which melts and transforms the most stubborn. This power is what corresponds in the moral forest to that plant called saxifrage, which we discover in the natural woods, insinuating itself into the hardest, loftiest rocks; choosing its own locality, unsown by human hand, and having for instrument nothing but the wind of heaven, which bloweth where it listeth. " Let no one discuss," says St. Odo, abbot of Cluny, " why, the Jewish people standing, the Gentiles lay prostrate, and, the Gentiles rising, the Jewish people fell; for this judgment which was visited upon nations befals in like manner different men—one being repelled, the other elected, by an occult but not by an unjust sentence. Let us fear then for ourselves; for each soul is treated as one city and one nation, the Lord attending to each as if he neglected all, and to all as if he neglected each[‖]." Wondrous are all conversions; but Providence brings in some boats that are not steered, and then we wonder most. St. Gertrude ascribes her own vocation to a religious life to this ineffable unassisted action, praising God for

[*] Soph. Ajax, 594.

[†] The Alcade of Zalamea.

[‡] 35.

[§] Hug. à S. Vict. de Bestiis.

[‖] S. Od. Mor. in Job, lib. xxv.

his mercy towards her in her early years, and for the patience with which he dissembled and endured all her youth till her twenty-fifth year, which, she says, she had passed with such blind madness, that she acted in thought, word, and deed without remorse of conscience, so that, unless gratuitously preserved by a certain detestation of evil and a delight in goodness, either mercifully granted to her as if in the way of nature, or by the exterior admonition of others supplied to her, she might have lived as any Pagan might live among Pagans, and have never understood that God would punish evil. Therefore, for the emendation of all her sins, she offers to her loving Father all the passion of his beloved Son, from his first cries in the manger, through all his infantine necessities, puerile wants, youthful adversities, and juvenile passions, to supply all her defects and negligences. It was not, she says, till the Advent after the completion of her twenty-fifth year that her heart was so moved that thenceforth all juvenile wantonness began to grow insipid, and thus was her heart prepared for God. "In my twenty-sixth year," she says, "and on the second feria before the Purification, about twilight after complin, thou, the true light shining in darkness, with that night didst terminate for me the day of girlish vanity obscured with the darkness of spiritual ignorance; for at that hour thou didst make known to me, in a manner surpassing all thought and sweetness, how I was associated with thy love, and granted a knowledge of myself and of my own intimate depth, which before that hour were unknown to me*."

That there is another issue, which can be called natural, from the obscure and dreadful roads of sin, by means of the internal monitor which is given to every man, can also be discerned; so that even the Roman historian cites examples of luxury and lust which he terms a bland evil, "ut se ipsam recognoscens, ad pœnitentiam impelli possit†." Nevertheless, conscience points to divine faith as its needful complement, for without tradition, without instruction, what is it? "Cui conscience ne reprent," says the Chronique de Rheims of the thirteenth century, "plustot au mal qu' au bien entend." It is Catholicity supremely beyond every thing else which makes this voice audible. It is Catholicity alone which delivers men, like Rinaldo under the enchantment of Armida. Its representative is Ubaldo, holding right in Rinaldo's face the shield of adamant which had been brought for the purpose. It was a mirror that showed to the eyes of every one who looked into it the very man as he was. And when Rinaldo beheld himself indeed; when he read his transformation, not in the flattering glass of the enchantress, but

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* Insin. Div. Pict. seu Vit. S. Gertrudis Abb. ii. 23.

† Val. Max. lib. ix.

by the light of this true, and simple, and severe reflector, shame and remorse fell upon him; he looked down, he could not speak.

Before advancing to observe other issues, let us pause a few moments here to mark examples of those who have profited by these two first openings, to which, indeed, all beyond are but tributary or instrumental. Louis François de Guérand, Seigneur de Locmaria, coming into possession of the marquisate in early youth, became the terror of the parish, and the desolation of his mother. It is said that, when he used to set out, that good Lady used to run herself to sound the castle-bell, in order to give the alarm to the canton. This Marquis de Guérand, however, after his first youth, became a truly good man. Till lately, one saw the ruins of an hospital which he founded for the poor near his castle in Britany. The tradition relates, that every evening, and till a late hour of the night, a small light could be seen from one of the windows of this hospital; and that, if the belated traveller asked the cause, the reply was, "It is the Marquis de Guérand who watches; he prays God on his knees to pardon his youth*."

What a wonderful event was the conversion of Bertulph, the cruel husband of St. Godeliebe, who, after her death, went to Rome, staff in hand, on foot, to make his solemn confession; then returning a strange pilgrim, and arriving one evening in the autumn at the gate of the monastery of St. Vinocq, at Bergues, near Dunkerque, asking to speak with the abbot, who received him to take the habit where he lived in sanctity to his death. "The first daughter whom God destined to our congregation," says the nun Du Changy, "after our blessed foundress, was our honoured sister and mother, Marie-Jacqueline Fabre, who, dancing at Chambery in the midst of a ball, where all eyes were fixed on her, was so favourably regarded by God, that he made her see efficaciously the vanity of human things. Her heart made the ball-room a church, and in that spot she vowed to God to leave the world †." Richebourcq supplies another instance in few words that imply much. "Ulricus Fuggerus," he says, "is commemorated on his tomb as he qui in Paul. III. P. R. cubiculo veritatis lumen ex familia primus et solus agnovit vitamque privatam amplissimis dignitatibus anteferre didicit ‡." An example from Cæsar of Heisterbach is memorable. "When Henry, uncle of the king of France, was so miraculously converted at Clairvaux, whither he had come only to speak with St. Bernard, when his whole family deplored the event, a cer-

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* Hersart de la Villemarque, Chants Populaires de la Bretagne.

† Mém. de S. Jeanne de Chantal, chap. 26.

‡ Ultima Verba Factaque, &c. 134.

tain Parisian named Andrew, through excess of grief, burst into a fury, vociferating that his Lord was drunk, or mad, or senseless, and adding even blasphemies ; and, when Henry besought the saint to pray for his conversion, he replied, 'Be not uneasy about him. His soul is now in bitterness ; but he is yours.' And when Andrew heard him repeat this word he exclaimed, 'I will prove you a false prophet before the kings and princes.' And when he departed next day, imprecating all evil to the monastery, and meditating how he should subvert it, the same night, conquered, and as if chained, grace attracting him, and with such violence that he could hardly wait till daylight, he returned to the monastery, and, like another Saul, rendered himself up to the blessed man*." We find an instance very similar in the Magnum Speculum. "A certain excellent youth of fourteen years," it says, "from the parts of Germany, in company with his tutor, travelling to Paris for his studies, passing by Clairvaux, the tutor, seeing the abbey and order of the place, by I know not what judgment of God, sought permission to be received to conversion. The youth, abhorring the thought of remaining with him, deaf to his advice, proceeded on his journey ; but the next and following nights he had such visions, that he came hastening back to St. Bernard, begging to be received, who admitted him benignly into the order, in which he persevered holily till his death †."

Thus of these conversions, which form, perhaps, the largest category, we know nothing further than that the effect was complete. Proceeding, however, to observe others, we shall find that the instrumentality employed in accomplishing them can be distinguished. Thus some penitents are led to the centre by fear, which, indeed, is pronounced from on high to be the beginning of wisdom. Eternity is mute. Well, but as yet there are warnings to be heard. "Oh, thrice happy is the soul," exclaims Antonio de Guévara, "which descends alive into hell—that is, which makes a pilgrimage in mind to it, to behold the proud confounded, the envious suppressed, the gluttonous famished, the wrathful submerged, and the luxurious tortured. This is a holy pilgrimage, from which no one can be excused." "Some men are converted," says Cæsarius, "by fear, caused by visions of the pains of hell ‡," as in the instance of the Marquis Ugo, who was so terrified by the vision of a fiery pit or smithy within a forest, that he repented on the spot, and founded seven religious houses as proof of his contrition. "The venerable Boniface, bishop of Lausanne, related to me," says Joannes Major, "that a certain noble, hunting in his diocese, towards the close of day, lost his attendants and his dogs in a forest among

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* Lib. i. c. 19.

† P. 141.

‡ Lib. i. c. 34.

the Alps, and, wandering far in solitude, was terrified by the vision of a knight whom he beheld chained prostrate to the ground, and bleeding, while two dogs were barking and running round him in a circle ; and that the knight told him the vision was for his instruction ; for that he was a knight living in the time when Richard, king of England, made battle with Philip, king of France. 'During the expedition by the Brabanters into Poictou and Gascony, I was,' he said, 'foremost in all profligacy, reckless of all crime, and I spared no one ; but, falling sick of a fever, I continued without the sacraments or contrition for my sins, till at the hour of my death, becoming speechless, I was struck with such compunction, that in weeping I expired. This short but true contrition secured my salvation at the day of judgment, but till then I am tormented thus ;' and with these words he vanished. The soldier, hearing and seeing this, renounced his rapine of the poor, and his evil life, and lived ever afterwards in an exemplary manner, converting many other sinners by the narrative of his own conversion*." In the same book we find another example, which is related as follows :—"There were two brothers who came to Paris to study, where the younger, truly devout, served God, and applied diligently to his learning ; whereas the elder brother, choosing the worst for his companions, gave himself up to vices with such continued perversity, that not only the students, but even the plebeian multitude began to abhor his reprobate life. The younger brother repeatedly besought him to amend his manners, setting before him the judgments of God, and all the while praying to God for the gift of his brother's conversion. The merciful Lord heard the pious boy's prayers. The elder brother became sick and fell into despair. One night he had a vision, in which his Creator, God the Father, seemed to announce that he was the son of eternal death. The next day he lay in horrible misery ; and lo! the following night Christ appeared to him, and pronounced that he was the son of eternal death, and, while speaking, threw the blood which flowed from his side upon his face, saying, 'Take this for thy confusion, which is for the redemption of others.' Then, when day came, the wretched patient sent for his brother, and told him his two dreadful visions, and declared his despair, saying that the sentence of the eternal Judge was now unchangeable. The brother consoled him, and assured him that it was never too late to repent, for the Holy Ghost to absolve the penitent. So saying, he introduced a priest, to whom the other, with tears and sighs, made his confession. The next night he had a vision, in which he seemed to hear the assurance of his forgiveness from the third Person of

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* Mag. Spec. 150.

the blessed Trinity, announcing that he should die on the third day after. The youth, ineffably rejoiced, expected his departure, which took place at the time predicted*." In the same book the following instance is related :—The jester of a great baron wholly given to delights, after hearing a holy preacher, began to think how he could endure to be bound for only ten years on the most luxurious bed in the world ; and the thought had such an effect upon him, when he meditated on eternal pains, that he became wholly converted and changed†. A more impressive instance is then added. "The Lord Wilo, abbot, afterwards cardinal, when sent to Cologne to confirm the election of Otho, related to us an example of holy simplicity sufficiently pleasant. He said that there was a monastery of our order which suffered great injury from a neighbouring nobleman, who, like a cruel tyrant, used to plunder its possessions whenever he liked, and as much as he liked, so that this custom of robbery passed into law with him. On one occasion he seized the chief part of a flock, and had it driven to his castle. The abbot and monks consulted as to what should be done, and it seemed best to depute some one to go to remonstrate with him ; but, beginning with the abbot, prior, and cellerarius, every one declined the office. At length some one ironically said, 'Let that old and simple monk go to him,' naming one of the brethren, who consented. He asked the abbot, on setting out whether, if any portion were offered to him, he ought to accept it, who replied, 'Certainly, in the name of the Lord ; better something than nothing.' So he went and came to the castle ; and, because the simplicity of the just is despicable in the eyes of the evil, the tyrant said, 'Wait till you have dined, and then I will answer you.' So he was placed at the common table, and flesh-meat was served to him as to the others. The holy man, remembering the words of the abbot, and not doubting but that the meat at table was all from the flocks of the monastery, partook as largely as he could of it with the others. The lord of the castle sitting opposite with his wife, and remarking that the monk eat flesh-meat, after dinner took him aside, and said, 'Tell me, good sir, are your monks in the habit of eating meat?' 'Never,' he replied. 'Only without, then, I suppose,' he added. 'Neither within nor without do they eat meat.' 'Why, then, did you eat it to-day?' asked the tyrant. 'On leaving, my abbot told me to take of our flock whatever you would offer me ; and as I concluded that the meat on your table was all from our flock, and fearing that no more of it would be restored but what I could take with my teeth, I eat from obedience not to return empty.' The nobleman,

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* Mag. Speculum, 134.

† 376.

quite struck with his reply, and internally moved to compunction, told him to wait. He then went to his wife, and said, 'I fear the anger of God will quickly overtake me if I reject the suit of this simple and just man.' And she replied, that such were her thoughts also; upon which, returning to the monk, he said, 'Good father, your holy simplicity has so moved me, that I will restore to your monastery all that I have taken from it; and never will I afflict it more.' The old man returned with the joyful news, which filled the monks with admiration*." But let us hear Dagobert the Great, in his charter of foundation to an abbey. "My father Lothair, of happy memory, being dead, I succeeded to the care of the kingdom; but moved by the levity of life, and distracted by the cupidity of rule, I neglected the duties of the royal office, evincing no solicitude, doing nothing, having no zeal of justice. Among my other excesses, I began to be a destroyer and dissipator of churches, of which I ought to have been the defender and founder, fearing neither the eyes of the Divine Majesty nor the pitiful exclamations of men. At length the benignity of God, breaking the pride of my obstinate mind, visited me with the rod of chastisement, and did not refuse pardon; for, admonished in a vision," of which he proceeds to relate the fearful details, "I returned to life, as it were, confiding in mercy. Therefore, in this hope, we have constructed a church in the place which is called Weissemburg, which we have decreed to enrich with royal magnificence†."

These examples point to the Catholic Church as taking advantage of all occasions to impress upon man a salutary fear of the eternal Judge; for Catholicity does not seek to explain away such testimonies, as if the summum bonum consisted in rejecting them: it would rather wisely comment on them, saying with St. Bruno, "the Judge will come neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the desert mountains. To be dreaded is that Judge whose presence no one can escape! For He is not local, to come from east or west, north or south; but He is every where. That Judge is God, who, according to the divine nature, is not local, though, according to the human nature, He is local‡." Catholicity takes advantage of every thing to urge this fear. It cries, Woe! woe! woe! to the doubting sinner. It sends forth its messenger betimes, like the angel that Schiller's infidel beholds in death, holding up a signet-ring of iron, and crying, "Eternal, holy, just, immutable! There is but one truth; there is but one virtue!" It holds up

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* Lib. vi. c. 7.

† Antonio de Yepes, Chronic. Gen. Ord. S. Bened. tom. ii. 144.

‡ S. Brun. Carthus. Expos. in Ps. lxxiv.

a flashing mirror, and says, "This is the mirror of truth; hypocrisy and deceit cannot look on it." It presents to the mind's eye that angel holding in his hand the brazen balance, at the clang of which the rocks send forth thunders, while a voice is heard saying, "Approach, ye sons of Adam! I weigh your thoughts and your deeds!" It cites Pliny, saying, "Cato was the best orator, the best commander, the best senator. Proprium Catonis, quater et quadragies causam dixisse, nec quenquam sæpius postulatum, et semper absolutum*;" and it demands, "Shall we be always thus successful? always, and for every repeated prevarication, pardoned?" It exhorts with St. Athanasius, saying, "Adam once sinned, and is dead. What was his sin? Not eating the apple; but transgressing the command. And He who said to Adam that He should not eat of the fruit of the tree prescribes to you not to traduce, not to lie, not to hear a detractor, not to covet, not to envy, not to be lukewarm, not to be greedy, not to render evil for evil; but to love your enemies, to pray for your persecutors—not to litigate in secular courts, not to be tenacious of your own, nor to eat with the transgressors of God's law; and if you despise Him in any one of these commands, if He spared Adam, you may conclude that He will spare also you†." "Certe," says St. Bonaventura, "qui in flumine periclitatur, libenter extendit manum ad natandum ne submergatur; sic et tu ad bona opera ne submergaris in Gehenna‡."

Others, again, are converted through natural fear, caused by temporal danger or calamity, though for these the escape is more obstructed. At Antioch, in the time of St. Chrysostom, some were moved to penitence by earthquakes; but how long lasted their contrition? While the earth was shaking. A few days after they were the same as before. Nature thus, at least by the report of travellers, supplies men with ground for salutary fear. "A deep and peculiar impression is produced," says Humboldt, "on the mind by the first earthquake which we experience, when our innate confidence in the immobility of the ground beneath us is at once shaken. From our earliest childhood we are accustomed to confide in the immobility of the earth; all the evidences of our senses have confirmed this belief; and, when suddenly the ground itself shakes beneath us, a force of which we had no previous experience presents itself as a strange and mysterious agency. A single instant annihilates the illusion of our whole previous life; we feel the imagined repose of nature vanish, and that we are ourselves transported

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* N. H. vii. 18.

† Exhort. ad Sponsam Christi, ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg. ii. 13.

‡ Serm. de B. Andrea.

into the realm of unknown destructive forces. Every sound affects us—our attention is strained to catch even the faintest movement of the air—we no longer trust the ground beneath our feet. To man, the earthquake carries a sense of danger of which he knows not the extent or limit. In fact," continues this great author, "the quiet which we now enjoy is only apparent; the tremblings which still shake the earth in every latitude, the progressive elevation of Sweden, and the appearance of new islands of eruption, are far from giving us reason to suppose that our planet has reached a period of entire and final repose." Custom, it is true, in general reconciles men to danger. Examples, however, of permanent conversion through such instrumentality occur. Passavante cites from the book of the seven gifts the history of a pirate, who, being moved by fear during a tempest at sea to resolve on confession, after a series of horrible crimes, received for penance, to think on death; and that, whenever he met a funeral, he was to accompany the procession, holding the corpse by the hand to the grave, and then assisting to inter it. The corsair complied; and one day, while thus employed, he was seized with such horror of death, and remorse for his sinful life, that he repaired to the desert, and, having taken a religious habit, lived there in holy penance for the rest of his days. "A certain keeper of a tavern," says the author of the Magnum Speculum, "who admitted all persons, however bad, to drink in his house, was one day carried into the air by a sudden whirlwind; and he cried, 'O God! what will become of my soul?' Immediately falling on the grass, he thought he heard a voice saying, 'Because you forgot all transitory things, and your body, and besought God, truly contrite for your soul, we cannot carry you off further; but otherwise, we should have had permission to carry you to hell.' The demons vanished. The man was found lying there. He recovered, changed his life, and never afterwards permitted evil in his house*." In the general chronicles of the Benedictine Order we find another instance. "St. Dandelinus, of a noble house in the country of Cambray, was educated in the house of the Bishop St. Autbert, with other noble boys. His relations, fearing that the bishop had an intention of making him a priest and monk, secretly warned him against such a design, and advised him to follow arms like his father. They succeeded. The boy fled from the bishop's house, and followed their counsels so well, that he gave himself up to all vices, and at length joined a gang of robbers, and changed his name to Maurosus. The bishop never ceased praying for him. There was a rich house which excited the cupidity of Maurosus, and he laid the plan for

* 153.

entering it; but that very night one of his gang died suddenly. This had such an effect on him, that he resolved to change his life; so, returning to St. Autbert, he confessed with a flood of tears all the sins of his mad career, and became a holy penitent, and finally abbot of St. Crispin's*."

The blessed Father Hernard de la Crest, of the Order of Mercy, was converted in 1305, by the reflections he made merely on hearing of the catastrophe which befel John, duke of Britany and Guillard Got, brother of the pope, who was killed by the fall of a wall at Lyons, on which crowds were mounted to see pass the coronation train of the pontiff, when the two brothers of the king of France were dangerously wounded and the pope himself exposed to danger, the tiara falling from his head. The Doctor Hernard was so moved, that he did not eat or drink for a long time, considering within himself how the greatest men are exposed continually to sudden death †. On all occasions of this kind it is again the Catholic Church which, warning men from delay, reveals herself to the penitent, by the truth of which he becomes experimentally conscious. The world replies like Archias refusing to read the letter which disclosed the conspiracy about to burst upon the tyrants at Thebes. He was pressed to read it, and told that it contained important things. "Important things," he answered, "are for to-morrow." The Catholic lesson teaches that

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Not when it must, but when it may be best."

"The day declines towards evening," says St. Ephrem, "and no one knows what may befal him on the road; and as when a traveller, who knows the length of his journey, nevertheless falls asleep through fatigue, and rests till evening, and then, on awaking, sees the day so far gone, when he begins to resume his way, and suddenly a great storm of thunder and lightning, and wind and hail, comes on, and renders all progress or return impossible, so also shall we be confounded if we repent not till the end of our days; for we are travellers, and we should press on to our city ‡." "If any one sin," says Regino, abbot of Prume in the ninth century,—cum omni festinatione recurrat ad vivificantem matrem Ecclesiam §." "How many men," says Chateaubriand, "have never remounted the staircase they had descended!" The old Catholic literature multiplies examples of the danger of delay. "A certain impenitent sinner used to say boastingly," says the author of the Magnum Speculum, "that he

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* Ant. de Yepes, tom. ii. 235.

† Hist. de l'Ordre de la Mercy, 220.

‡ De Perfecta Vita.

§ De Eccles. Discip. lib. i. 139.

would take care in his last moments to be saved by means of three words. Passing a bridge one day, his horse shyed and fell over with him into the river, while his last words were—capiat omnia dæmon, and no other obsequies had he [*]." "A certain scholar at Paris," says the same author elsewhere, "about to enter a religious order, endeavoured to persuade a comrade to follow his example, who replied, 'I will remain three years at Paris to become a master of arts; then I will stay four years at Montpelier to be a master in medicine; afterwards I will stop five years at Bologna to be a master in laws; and at the end of that time I will attend to my soul as you desire, and enter religion;' so, going to bed for the night, the next morning, when called to the lecture, he was found dead [†]."

On the other hand, not alone the fear, but the presence of temporal calamity produces conversions which proclaim the power of Catholicity as being that which can alone sanctify affliction. St. Bavon was a tyrant and a robber; but, having been affected by the prayer of a child, the death of his pious wife completed his conversion. So he fell at the feet of St. Amand, and rose up a man of God, acting, as Beatrice tells Dante he ought to have done, saying,—

"Howe'er, that thou mayst profit by thy shame
For errors past, and that henceforth more strength
May arm thee, when thou hear'st the Syren voice
Lay thou aside the motive to this grief
And lend attentive ear, until I unfold
How opposite a way my buried flesh
Should have impell'd thee [‡]."

The venerable Father Didacus Alphonso, of the Order of Mercy, in the province of Cusco, was moved to renounce the world by grief for the death of a young gentleman to whom he was greatly attached. He could say with St. Augustin, "Mihi horrori erat vita, quia nolebam dimidius vivere." He fled all society, and used to retire into thick forests to think upon his loss. God made use of this affliction to teach him who was Catholically-minded the inconstancy of human things, and the wisdom of being prepared to die [§]. Another source of penitence, which reveals the divine truth of the Catholic religion, consists in the prayers that are offered up within the Church for the conversion of sinners. The venerable curate Desgenettes, now living in Paris, should be the guide of those who seek information on this point; but as usual, confining our observation to historical rather than to contemporary examples, let us cite a few ancient narratives

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[*] Id. 363.

[†] Id. 176.

[‡] Id. ii. 31.

[§] Hist. de l'Ordre de la Mercy, 507.

as they occur to memory. Cæsar of Heisterbach was not unprovided with them, which leads him to observe that many are converted by the prayers of monks and holy persons, while others are converted by the mere examples of piety which they marked, without any exhortations of discourse being addressed to them *. In all ancient Catholic books of history examples of this kind abound. In 1157 took place the wonderful conversion of Henry, baron of Kuppingen, a sworn enemy to the monks of Zwifalt, who, finding no redress possible, had recourse to prayers to God with such effect, that suddenly he became holy, and not only made restitution of all he had ever robbed from them, but came and offered all that he possessed, and himself, assuming the habit and being subsequently elected abbot of that house †. Donna Aloysia de Padilia making a journey for a few days to Empudia, where her husband, Don Martin de Padilia, was governor, took with her Marina de Escobar. They had in their house a certain Moorish servant, most obstinate in his sect, which when Marina knew she repaired with one companion to the place where he was working, and spoke with him most sweetly on the things relative to his soul. While she prayed for him, the heart of the Turk began to soften, who, by God's disposing, one night dreamt, that passing by a certain church he saw the door open, and within seated on a throne a certain venerable man, from the description of whose dress I concluded, says Marina, that it was a bishop, who called him, saying, "Martin, ascend here;" but he replied, "I am not called Martin, but Ali, and I never enter a church;" but the saint replied, "You are to enter the Church though, and to be called Martin" (perchance because the lord governor had that name), "and approaching he compelled him to enter, pushing him in. He told this dream to Marina, and soon after faith was granted to him and he was added to the number of Christians ‡. Don Juan Alphonso Pimentel, count of Benevento, gave this testimony: "I knew that the Lady Marchioness de Velez had a Turkish servant named Moloca, obstinate in her sect, who falling sick evinced no disposition to conversion. The lady sought for her the prayers of Marina de Escobar, and I was present when this Mahometan servant began to cry out, 'The rosary of the Christian, Marina,' calling thus for it repeatedly, and saying that during the night Marina had appeared to her along with the blessed Virgin, by both of whom she was invited to heaven. She accordingly received baptism. So fervent did she become, that afterwards when any one called her Moloca, she used to say, 'Not Moloca, but Maria.' Her death took place soon after-

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* lib. i. c. 20.

† Chronolog. Constantiens.

‡ Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, p. i. lib. i. c. xi.

wards. All the circumstances were notorious in that palace. It appears that, besides praying for her, Marina had sent Marina Hernandez with directions to touch Moloca secretly with her chaplet, which she had done *." Cæsar of Heisterbach mentions several instances of the force of prayer in this respect. "Within the last two years," he says, "when Lord William, abbot of Clairvaux, with other abbots, went to Rome against Cardinal Gallo, one of his monks went to confession to a certain confessor, who told him that he could not give him absolution, as it was to his prior that he ought to have confessed; and, when the other said that he never would confess to him, the priest lamented bitterly for the danger of the penitent, and disclosed what he had said to the Prior Sigerus, who grieved greatly, and invoked the angel of the great counsel with many tears. At that time a certain perverse convert having been detected in theft, the prior, by the suggestion of God, took occasion in the chapter of the monks to add, 'Lest there be any one amongst you with a cauterized conscience, so that he cannot open it to his prelate, I enjoin you all to pray for three days with that intention.' All did pray, and amongst them a young priest named William, who on the vigil of All Saints, as he prayed with tears, heard a divine voice saying, 'Tell the prior to be ready tomorrow after Prime before the chapter-room, for a certain monk will apply to him.' And so it was; for, the prior placing himself there, the same monk came and made his confession, and received condign penance †." He also relates the following example. "Having heard of a certain monk of our order who had received the gift of tears through the prayers of a holy nun of our order, I asked our abbot to allow me to visit some such woman, and he gave me leave. As I stopped on the way to lodge at the hospice of a certain honest matron of Brabant, when she understood my desire, she said in joke, 'Why do you wish to see these virgins? If you wish, I can show you a good woman who can obtain from God whatever she asks.' I expressed my desire to see her, and immediately a certain woman came out of an adjacent room and began to converse with me; and, feeling that there was much grace in her conversation, I asked her to pray for me. 'What do you wish that I should pray for?' she replied. I answered, 'that I might weep for my sins.' 'Are you not then a monk?' she asked. 'He who cannot weep for his sins is not a monk.' On my pressing her to pray for this, she replied, 'Go your ways, you will have tears in abundance.' The next night, as I was praying before my bed, thinking of my sins, and not of the woman's promise, I began to weep in a manner so extraordinary, which continued till midnight, that I began to fear, finding that

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* Id. p. ii. lib. iii. c. 12.

† lib. iii. c. 51.

my tears would still flow on in spite of what I could do to stop them *." "At another time," says Cæsarius, "I asked one of our monks to pray for me, that I might obtain the grace of tears after mass, and he promised that he would. The following day, as I remained before the altar after mass, and was alone in the church, my tears began to fall in abundance. Afterwards, when the same monk saw me, he made signs, which I not understanding, led him to the prior, who said to me, 'He desires to know whether you have not wept this day?' and, when I asked if he had seen me, he replied, 'I was bled this day, and therefore not present at the masses.' He then acknowledged that he had prayed fervently that God would give me tears †."

Again, another class of penitents point to Catholicity as having owed their conversion from sin to a movement produced in their souls by a conception of the beauty of faith. "Ah! who has not sometimes experienced the want of being regenerated, of renewing his youth in the waters of the torrent, of refreshing his soul at the fountain of life? Who," continues Chateaubriand, "has not found himself, some time or other, oppressed with the burden of his own corruption, and incapable of doing any thing great, or noble, or just ‡?" In the Catholic Church alone are such wants respected and provided for. "Quare magis delectaris," demands St. Bonaventura, "in vulneribus peccati quam in vulneribus Jesu Christi §?" Excepting within her pale, who ever hears of the wounds of Christ to draw any practical inference from them? "Some men," says Cæsarius, "are converted, not by the sting of conscience, but by the desire of innocence and through love of the celestial country ||." "Cheer up! Behold this smiling landscape, this delicious evening!" So speaks one of the gang to Schiller's captain. "Yes," he replies, "this world is very lovely, and I so hideous in this lovely world, a monster on this glorious earth! My innocence! Give me back my innocence! Behold, every living thing is gone forth to bask in the cheering rays of the vernal sun! Why must I alone inhale the torments of hell, out of the joys of heaven? All are so happy, all so united in brotherly love, by the spirit of peace!—the whole world one family and one Father above, but He not my father! I alone the outcast; I alone rejected from the ranks of the blessed; the sweet name of child not for me!" These are they to whom the Church alludes as having been arrested in their wanderings, and shown by God the light of his truth, that they might return into the way of justice ¶.

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* ii. c. 21.

† ii. c. 22.

‡ Mém. d'Outre Tombe.

§ Stimulus Divin. Amor. p. i. c. 2.

|| lib. i. 34.

¶ Collect Third Sunday after Easter.

——— "As on his feet
The falcon first looks down, then to the sky
Turns, and forth stretches eager for the food
That woos him thither; so the call they hear *."

As evidence of a similitude between human and divine things, we might observe some of the conversions which Valerius Maximus narrates. Polemo, a licentious youth, returning after sunrise from a night's debauch, and finding open the door of Xenocrates, entered, amidst the indignant looks of the scholars; but hearing the discourse on modesty and temperance he was converted, says the Roman author, to a life of philosophy. "Peregrinatus est hujus animus in nequitia; non habitavit †." If the natural path to God was thus attractive, what will not the supernatural road become? The beauty of divine faith wins back in throngs those who had not only passed through iniquity, but who had dwelt in it as in their chosen abode. The dissipated straggler, from a carnival passing by a church on the first morning of Lent, is converted by the looks of some one entering it, the loveliness of whose mind, intent on Catholic musings, can, like a flash of lightning in darkness, reveal the deformity of his own thoughts. Father Patrignane, a Jesuit, in the middle of the seventeenth century, in his poem on the childhood of our Saviour, gives an episode which indicates his familiarity with such conversions; for he represents the holy family, on their flight into Egypt, meeting a robber in a wood, who no sooner sees the child than he is moved to compassion. Inviting them into his hut, hidden in the depths of the wood, he kindles a fire, and prepares to kill a lamb, but St. Mary begs him to spare it. He complies, and presents them with bread and fruit. "What beauty," he exclaims, "in this child! In spite of my rough nature, He steals away my heart." "Perhaps," replies the blessed mother, "a day may come when you will receive from this dear Son the reward for your hospitality." The robber then leads them to the safe track, and takes leave of them at the skirts of the wood, not to meet again our Saviour till he attends Him at his death, and leaves the cross for paradise. "Consider," says St. Bonaventura, unfolding the beauties which win so many hearts, "the incomparable and ineffable goodness which ordained that I should see the God who created me a boy created for me—the God of majesty and glory subject to all the weakness and misery of our nature. Consider the Lord of Sabaoth, who filleth the heavens and the earth, lying an infant in a manger; how He utters an infant's cry who thunders in heaven, under the thunder of whose voice the angelic powers

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* Purg. 19.

† lib. vi.

bow their wings. Oh! since it is impossible to remember all, let at least the greatest of all the benefits which God has conferred upon you, namely, that of redemption, never depart from your memory *." Cæsar of Heisterbach mentions an instance of one whose permanent and solid conversion seems to have resulted from obedience to this injunction even while pursuing ways of vanity, for he writes as follows:—" It is a mortal sin to go to a tournament; or, rather, two deadly sins are committed by those who join in them, namely, pride, as it is for the sake of human praise; and disobedience, as it is against the prohibition of the Church; and yet Walter de Birbach, a relation of Henry, the duke of Louvain, who was so devout a knight, and constant in hearing mass from a boy, and in fasting and making alms, was thought to be assisted in tournaments by a divine aid; for the mass which he heard going to the tournament, in spite of the remonstrances of the other knights, who refused to wait for it, would have been meritorious of eternal life, if he had assisted in charity, and therefore it passed to the furtherance of a temporal reward, seeing with what disposition he remained to hear it. However, it is certain that he was a very religious knight. He had such a love for the blessed Virgin, that to a certain poor church dedicated in her honour, by consent of the priest he offered himself with a rope round his neck as a serf of the glebe, ransoming himself every year afterwards with a certain sum. On Fridays and Saturdays he used to fast on bread and water. Finally, he renounced all that he had—riches, honours, friends, and became a Cistercian monk, through love of the blessed Virgin, in Hemmenrode, where he was made master of the hospice, discharging every duty of the house in such a manner as to cause universal edification. He was of such compassion towards the poor, that when on a journey he used to anticipate the indigent, and offer them money before they asked for it. One very cold day, as I was with him, meeting a certain scholar who was barefoot, he alighted from his horse and gave him his own shoes. Being asked one day by the prior what he thought upon while at table, as he did not understand the lessons, he replied, "I have a reading to myself; for when I begin to eat I consider how the Son of God was announced for me by the angel, and so I turn over the first leaf; then I think how He was born and laid in a manger, and lo, the second leaf is read. In this manner I pass through all the circumstances of his life till his passion and ascension, and ending with the last judgment. Such are my lessons at table." How deeply he felt this reading was clear from the tears which used to fall from his eyes on the table. He was generally more delighted with meditations than with specific

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* Amatorium.

demands in prayer. At the time of his death, Winemar de Aldendorp, a rich and honourable knight, who was confined to his bed with paralysis, sent a messenger to the monastery to beg that the boots of the holy man might be sent to him; but, when a new pair were sent, he returned them. Soon after, by another messenger receiving the old boots of the man of God, and placing his dead hands and feet upon them, he recovered the use of both. Then he built a chapel in his castle, and placed the boots in a wooden altar in presence of our abbot *.

The conversion of Cæsarius, as described by himself, seems to belong to the same category; for he says, "At the time when King Philip was devastating the diocese of Cologne, I was riding to Cologne along with the Lord Gerard, abbot of the Mount St. Walburg, and while on the way he exhorted me greatly to conversion, but without effect. He then related to me that glorious vision at Clairvaux, in which the blessed Virgin, with St. Anne and St. Mary Magdalene, appeared to the monks as they were reaping in the fields; and I was so moved, that I promised I would not come, unless to his house, for the sake of conversion, if God should inspire me with the will. I was then bound by a vow of pilgrimage to St. Mary of the Rock of the Saviour; but, after three months having fulfilled it, without any of my friends suspecting, the mercy of God alone preventing and prompting me, I came to the valley of St. Peter, and there became a novice †." Some again point to the centre as having been first prompted to forsake the ways of sin by the impressions caused by witnessing the ceremonies or the observance of the discipline of the Catholic Church, of which they soon experience the efficacy when led to enter it;—

—— "And as birds, from river banks
Arisen, now in round, now lengthen'd troop,
Array them in their flight, greeting, as seems,
Their new-found pastures; so within this light
The saintly creatures flying, sing ‡."

The sacrifice of the mass is often the direct and immediate source of their deliverance, which consequently proclaims the truth of Catholicity. "There are," says Pope Innocent III., "three sacrifices of the Church—that of penitence, that of justice. and that of the Eucharist—of which we read, the sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit—then shalt thou accept the sacrifice of justice; to thee I will sacrifice the host of praise. In the sacrifice of penance is the wine of grief and compunction, the water of sadness and lamentation, the bread of labour and affliction, of grief in the heart, of sadness in the tongue, of labour

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* vii. c. 39.

† i. c. 17.

‡ Par. 18.

in work; in the sacrifice of justice is the bread of fortitude and constancy, the wine of rectitude and prudence, the water of gentleness and temperance; in the Eucharist, the bread of unity, the wine of charity, the water of fidelity. This leads beginners, guides the proficient, leads home the perfect from Egypt through the desert to their country—from the Egypt of confusion, through the desert of peregrination, to the country of glory. For there are three things which, according to the prophet, God requires from man—to love mercy, to do judgment, and to walk solicitously with God. Let him, therefore, love mercy who wishes to offer the sacrifice of penance; let him do justice who wishes to offer the sacrifice of justice; let him walk solicitously with God who wishes to offer the sacrifice of the Eucharist*." The solemnity of the ritual itself has been known to produce permanent conversions. "Brother Theoderic, our monk," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "as he often told me, when a youth in the world, came merely to visit a certain novice who was his relation, without any idea of being converted. It happened that a certain monk was buried on the same day, and when the community, having said the antiphon Clementissime Domine, proceeded then round the grave with great humility, imploring pardon, saying, 'Domine miserere super peccatore,' he was so struck and excited, that he, who before had resisted all the exhortations of the Lord Abbot Gerrard, now sought with many prayers to be received to conversion. Such a little matter sufficed to accomplish so great a work †!" The great festivals and the penitential seasons and observances of the Catholic church pass not without efficacy on some of those who follow the ways which we are now following. Louis XIV., as we infer from the testimony of Madame de Caylus, was an example; for, before his conversion, she says that the great festivals of the year used to fill him with remorse, equally troubled whether he refrained from his devotions or performed them ill ‡. February with the Romans was the month in which the consciences of criminals were purified, and the manes of the dead appeased. "Februare was purgare;" but it does not follow, as Protestants would pretend, that Catholicity is allied to Paganism, because in the same month the Church celebrates her procession of the Purification and observes the fast of Lent. Her divinity, at all events, might be established by the miraculous conversions to which her holy exercises lead. David and the ancients lay on the ground prostrate penitents, to avert the destroying angel §. Truth must be where we find perpetuated the instinct of duty implying

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* De Sac. Altar. Myst. iii. c. 4.

† i. c. 21.

‡ Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Madame de Maint.

§ 1 Paralip. 21.

reverential obedience, or sincere penitence including the reasonable sacrifice which is required from man. All the fathers have remarked that the first command of God to man in Paradise was that of abstinence[*]. St. Paul and St. Barnabas instituted and practised fasting from the foundation of the churches[†]. The discipline which obtains the conversion of some is itself a signal to indicate the central truth. "There can be only dispensations of fasting," says Thomassinus, "by just compensations. The Church, which has had indulgence for the rest, has never had it, and never can have it, on this capital and essential point of her discipline and morals; because it is a constant and immutable truth that men being sinners are obliged to do penance; and, as there are many exercises of penance, in proportion as they remit some, their fervour must increase, in others." Abuses cannot obscure the signal, though holy men recognize their existence to condemn them. "The use of fish in Lent," says Thomassinus, "would offer no subject of complaint, if one refrained from that inexcusable and, I had almost said, damnable affectation of adding such seasonings and dainties that the abstinence becomes a feast[‡]." "The true fast," says St. Basil, "is to refrain from all vices. You eat no flesh, but you devour your brother; you abstain from wine, but you do not refrain from injuries; you wait till vespers to take food, but you spend the whole day before the tribunals[§]." Catholicism in its fast implies obedience, not self-will. "Dicit se observare quinquagesimam, qui forte quadragesimam implere vix possit," says St. Ambrose[||]. The words quinquagesima or sexagesima are formed from quadragesima, as one or two weeks added to Lent. "It is a vain presumption to affect extraordinary observances and neglect those that are universal[¶]." The eighth Council of Toledo, in 653, requires a strict observance of Lent, "unless in case of inevitable necessity, evident weakness, or impossibility of age[**]." "You object," says Thomassinus, "that the food for Lent is dearer than meat. But that is no excuse for not making alms. 'Car c'est une condition deplorable des riches, et qu' il est juste d'expier par de plus grandes aumones, de ne pouvoir pas mesme jeûner, sans faire plus de dépense qu'en ne jeûnant pas; et de ne pouvoir faire pénitence qu'en usant d'alimens de plus grand prix qu'en un autre temps[††].'" All the Greeks and Orientals fast without using fish, and therefore retrench their expenses[‡‡]. It appears

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[*] Le P. Thomassin, Traité des Jeûnes, 2.

[†] Acts xiv. 22; 1 Cor. vii. 5; 2 Cor. xi. 17.

[‡] Id. p. i. c. 10.

[§] Orat. i. de Jejun. ap. id. c. xi.

[||] Serm. 34.

[¶] Part ii. c. 1.

[**] Ap. id. ii. c. 3.

[††] Id. ii. c. 26.

[‡‡] Id. ii. c. 26.

from St. Basil, that to remedy or meet the error of some superstitious disciples of Eustathius, who had flesh in horror, the faithful and all monks were ordered by the Council of Ancyra to eat their vegetables on days of abstinence with a particle of salt meat, and to follow this custom as not derogating from their fast. This custom having been perpetuated in the order of Cluny, St. Peter the Venerable prohibited it thenceforth for this reason, that in their age the monks alone used lard in cooking their vegetables; and that even the poor, to whom the leavings were given, refused to eat such food on days of abstinence, rejecting it with indignation, or else reserving it for another day*. The Emperor Justinian used sometimes in Lent to eat only every second day, and then only herbs. Charlemagne excused himself for eating in Lent before the hour of vespers, on the ground that even then the last officers of his household did not eat till midnight, as there were several tables for kings, dukes, counts, and others to be served in succession†. At first, and for many ages, the hour of dinner on days of fasting was after vespers. By degrees, about the year 1200, the office of vespers and the hour of dining were advanced to the hour of nones, or three o'clock; then, by degrees changing still the hour, at last, about the year 1500, the vespers and the repast were fixed for midday‡. It appears from St. Epiphanius, that during Lent the faithful assembled every day to hear sermons and assist at the divine offices§. St. Basil requires a sermon to be preached daily in Lent‖. St. Chrysostom says that "we must examine at the end of each week in Lent what fault we have corrected in ourselves, and that without that profit the fast is useless¶;" and again he says: "It is the time of fasting when we have so many exhortations, so many salutary lessons, constant prayers, daily collects**." St. Ambrose says of Lent, "Tota die sit nobis oratio, vel lectio; qui literas nescit, sanctum virum perquirens ejus confabulatione pascatur††." St. Augustin or St. Cæsarius of Arles speaks thus: "Si jejuniis, et vigiliis, et orationibus non insistimus; si Scripturas divinas aut ipsi non legimus, aut legentes alios non libenter audimus, ipsa nobis medicamenta convertuntur in vulnera, et inde habebimus judicium unde potuimus habere remedium‡‡." St. Augustin says that alms are more necessary than fasting. "It is good to fast, but better to give alms. It is best to exercise both; but, if one cannot, it is better to give alms. If fasting be impossible, alms suffice without fasting; but

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* Id. ii. c. 6.

† Ap. id. ii. c. 12.

‡ Id. ii. c. 12.

§ Expos. Fidei, n. 22.

‖ Orat. ii. de Jejun. ap. id. 15.

¶ Tom. ii. Hom. 2.

** Serm. v. in Gen.

†† Serm. 33.

‡‡ Serm. 55. de Tempor.

fasting without alms is not sufficient *." Cardinal Ximenes in his old age, being dispensed from fasting, was required by the Pope in compensation to nourish each day three poor persons. The fathers and councils have always insisted on this maxim, that during Lent all banquets, hunting, law-suits, diversions, and wars should cease †. Louis le Débonnaire used to devote Lent so completely to pious exercises, to psalmody, prayer, and alms-giving, that he scarcely indulged one or two days in riding for the sake of exercise ‡.

Now that this discipline, conducive to the conversion of men, supplies a signal to the truth of Catholicity, is recognized even by those who pass without immediately suffering it to influence their own conduct; and it is certainly a significant fact to observe that infidel writers at the present day, without any intention of advocating the truth of revelation, or the discipline of the Catholic Church, should feel drawn on by their own speculations to attest the connexion between abstinence and the exercise of the highest intellectual faculties. "After dinner," says one author of this kind, who affects to deliver truth in frivolous and burlesque language, "a man believes less, denies more; verities have lost some charm for him." Accordingly addressing an antagonistic system of laws and opinions, one, while still belonging to it, used these words: "You are not a fasting Church; yet every other Church in the world has been so from the earliest time. You are a Church without penances—the first the world has ever seen." To him, as the result proved, the signal along with others was sufficient.

Again, the conversion of some men by the active instrumentality of human agents in other ways besides those of secret prayer supplies a signal to the Catholic Church which has always produced examples of that action. Plutarch relates that, if any one passing by, thought he perceived that the foliage of the tree called the sacred service tree, which had sprung from the javelin of Romulus, was decaying, he gave an alarm, when every one ran with water, as if to a fire, and every neighbour brought his vessel to water it. For the trees of the Church, springing from the instruments of Christ's passion, it is not indeed every neighbour who has this lively concern; but divine faith provides especial guardians, who are charged to watch over them; and, besides, Catholicism imposes a certain responsibility on all who pass, requiring them to co-operate, as far as circumstances permit, in ministering to their spiritual wants. St. Amédée de Hauterive, related to the Emperor Conrad, possessing six great estates, living in the castle of Hauterive,

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* Serm. 62.

† Thomassin, ii. c. 25.

‡ Duchesne, ii. 318.

in the province of Vienne, being converted to a religious life, employed his first care in converting his vassals, with whom he used to converse as he rode from one castle to another, talking to them of the vanity of the world and the quick flight of time, till after a year he retired to the monastery of Bonnevaux with sixteen gentlemen and his only son; the latter becoming afterwards abbot of Hautecombe, and bishop of Lausanne, and regent of Savoy*. Another memorable example was that of the revengeful and brutal Nanni de Ser Vanni at Sienna, converted by St. Catharine of Sienna. He had consented to sacrifice one of his four enmities at her persuasion, and cried, "O my God, what consolation in my soul on pronouncing that one word of peace!" He quickly resolved to renounce them all. Another instance was the conversion of Nicolas Tuldo of Perugia, condemned for sedition, who in his prison entered in the way of salvation when she came to visit him. Another criminal on his way to the scaffold, while enduring the torture, was converted by her voice. Nicolas Tuldo was so penetrated with contrition, that he spoke of the scaffold which awaited him as the holy place. St. Catharine accompanied him to it; she placed his head under the axe. He only said, "Jesus, Catharine," and she received the head in her hands as it fell.

But it is by the high appointed ministry of the Catholic priesthood that the conversions of which we find examples on this road are chiefly effected; and consequently each penitent is a guide, who stands upon the way to direct all wanderers to the source of his transformation, as to a divine fountain of newness of life. Many declaim upon the wickedness of the age who seem to have no conception of a practical remedy. Nothing will content the secular moralist but some general universal consequence. The priest may be less loud in his complaints, and less exacting in his demands; but he effects a change, he makes a beginning. The Count of Oropese, speaking with St. Peter of Alcantara on the corruption of the world, the saint told him that there was an easy remedy for it. "Let you and me," he said, "be what we ought to be, and then, with God's aid, we shall have a remedy for the evil; since, if we correct ourselves, the world will begin to feel the remedy as far as it regards two persons at least; and, if others were to do the same, I conceive that this would be an efficacious remedy; but, if no one will correct himself, while lamenting the state of others, all things remain without remedy†." Such is the sacerdotal plan; and accordingly the two or three are actually reclaimed; the world

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* Hist. de plusieurs saints des maisons des Comtes de Tonnerre et de Clermont, 6—13.

† Le Père Marchèse, Vie de S. P. d'Alicant. iv. 9.

feels the remedy; its peace is troubled, its alliances are broken, its expectations frustrated; and in consequence many angry voices rise on all sides to denounce this action of the priest. We hear Dantean words:—

> "They spake, 'Come thou alone; and let him go,
> Who hath so hardily entered this forest.
> Alone return he by his witless way;
> If well he know it, let him prove.'"

Heedless of such cries, however, the priest continues to reclaim and guide those who feel the need of an Ariadne to enable them to escape out of this labyrinth, some perhaps after a time renouncing his aid, and even affecting to contract a hatred for him, while he replies in the words of St. Augustin, "What I say to you ought not to make you angry against me, but against yourself, that you may amend. For in this way you can practise the injunction, 'Be angry and sin not;' and who should you be angry with excepting yourself*?" In the deep night of moral evil the sacerdotal voice may cause surprise and alarm, but its soft persuasive sound eventually is found to attract the will and captivate the affections. "When the cock crows first in the night," says Hugo of St. Victor, "his cry is deeper and louder than when the morning dawns and men are awake; from which intelligence of the bird, preachers may learn to conform their warnings to the state of the minds which they address; for, when the morning of the divine light breaks, then it will be sufficient to entice and soothe their hearers with small gentle songs, announcing the subtle and delicate mysteries of faith†." "If any one," says St. Ephraim, "should keep a tame dove in his house, and one day, finding the window open, it should fly away, it is not by throwing a stick or a stone at the bird that he can hope to win it back, but by scattering seeds of corn. So should we deal with the human mind, whether it be our own or the mind of others, when good thoughts take flight‡." How easily in such sentences do men recognize the Catholic priest, who is master of the art of treating with men and with God according to the holy rules of his blessed order§. In the pulpit, in the common intercourse of life,—above all, in the confessional, as we shall shortly see, his invitation is in words that few can instantly and brutally resist; for he says to the worst men, in words that can give life to the dead,—

> "Let weakness then with weakness come to parle,
> So near related, or the same of kind,
> Thine forgive mine."

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* Serm. 35 in Luc.

† De Bestiis.

‡ Tractatus Minores.

§ L'Art de Traiter avec Dieu.

Accordingly the penitents we now meet point to Catholic priests as to the chosen instruments of their happy change. Let us observe a few in passing.

"I have done nothing," said a priest hermit, "so good and noble as that;" addressing a musician who had told him of his having succoured a poor maiden in distress while he was a robber. "Why," he continued, "do you remain in this city, following such a disreputable life as you now follow? Why not come from it, and devote yourself to the service of God?" The musician was converted and embraced a holy life. Let us hear Cæsar of Heisterbach: "Not far from the city of Trent, as a certain abbot related to me, there was a robber who infested the roads, who used even to kill those who attempted to defend themselves from him. One day meeting a monk of our order, and hoping that he carried money, he said, 'Unless you follow me willingly, I will kill you.' The monk followed him, and as they were on the way he asked him who and what he was; to whom the other replied, that he was the famous robber, giving his name. To whom the monk said, 'You are growing grey, and do you not fear for your soul?' 'Not more than a beast,' replied he. The monk was silent till they came to his cave, when he spake thus: 'Will you allow me to interrogate you?' 'Well, you may,' replied the robber. 'Then say what has been your life from the beginning?' 'Very bad,' he answered. 'When a boy, I used to fight with all my companions; when a youth, I used to steal; on becoming a man, I took to open robbery, and I am now captain of all the banditti of the province.' 'And do you not fear the eternal punishment prepared for such deeds?' asked the monk. 'I never think about my soul,' said the other, 'as I know it is lost.' 'What,' rejoined the monk, 'if I could show you a way of safety, would you acquiesce?' 'Perhaps I might,' replied the robber. 'Then fast one day in every week in honour of St. Mary, Mother of God, and during that day injure no one; and know for certain that she will obtain pardon for you from her Son.' 'I consent to do so,' said the robber, and he chose the Saturdays. At that time the country of Trent was devastated by the enemy, and on one occasion, as armed bands went about, they came upon this robber on a Saturday, and, as he renounced all self-defence, they seized him, led him into the city, and there, being recognized, he was condemned to death; yet moved, as it is believed, by the blessed Virgin, they commuted the sentence to perpetual banishment. But he desired to suffer death, saying that he preferred the punishment of this life to that of the next; and then made a public confession of his sins. He was decapitated without the city, and light was seen the following night over his tomb; and from that day to this there is hardly a single adult in the pro-

vince who does not fast on Saturday, after his example, in honour of our Lady*."

"A certain great clerk in Paris," says the author of Magnum Speculum, "who resisted the sermons of Master Jordan, was suddenly converted by the simple words of a parish priest, who, finding him one evening in St. Peter's Church, in which parish he was then residing, came up to him while the lessons were reading of the office of the dead, and asked if he was not his parishioner; and when he replied, I live in such a house, 'Well, then, you are of my parish,' said he, 'and I must deliver my own soul of you; for do you not know what you promised in baptism; that you would renounce Satan and his pomps? Now attend. Here in Paris are many scholars who crucify themselves over their books, saying in their hearts, when you have studied and become a master in Paris, returning to your country, you will be famous and honoured as a great clerk; and so you will ascend to dignities. And what is all this but the black pomp of Satan? Beware, my son, of such an intention in your studies, and see how many learned men renounce the world.' By this time, the lesson being finished, a clerk began the response, 'Heu mihi, Domine, quia peccavi nimis in vita mea. Quid faciam miser? ubi fugiam nisi ad te, Deus meus?' And thus the words of the priest on the one hand, and the chant of the clerk on the other, entering his heart like a trumpet, moved him to compunction, and he burst into tears. On going away, he seemed still to hear the words, 'Quid faciam miser? ubi fugiam nisi ad te, Deus meus?' And then he seemed to hear a voice in his heart adding, 'Whither but to the preaching friars of St. James?' And thither he went; and, after settling some affairs respecting debts, he entered the order, and Dominus Hugo, afterwards cardinal, who was his master, made his profession in the same during the following Lent†." There was a certain delicate scholar, Reginald, at Bologna, whom a good Dominican brother thought likely to embrace religion in the order. Disclosing his hopes to the superior, who was the youth's fellow-countryman, the latter said that he was too rich, and given to secular delights; but the sub-prior, with his consent, made him a visit. Finding all things so exquisite in his room, he durst not speak to him. The scholar, fearing the object of his visit, declared that he would only converse with him on one condition, namely, said he, "Quod nihil de Deo mihi dicatis." Then the sub-prior said, "Well, we will speak about our country and friends, and at the end only two words—De Deo." "Be it so," replied the youth; "beware of more." So, after some conversation, the monk, rising to depart, said,

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* vii. c. 39.

† Id. 170.

"Lord Reginald, I must not forget the two words we agreed to speak. Do you know, then, what sort of bed they will have in the next world who do not do penance in the present?" "No," he replied. "Then hear it," said he. "Isaias the Prophet tells it us: subtus te sternitur tinea, et operimentum tuum erunt vermes." So with these words he departed, and returned to his convent. The youth could think of nothing after but that bed. After a few days, he entered the order, preferring to have the hard bed, and the remainder of his life poor, so that after death he might be borne by angels to the Paradise of lasting joy*. A certain brother, falling under temptations, and wishing to return to his duty in the monastic life, was discouraged by the difficulty; and, consulting an old monk, he was thus advised. "There was a man," said he to him, "who, having a field full of thorns and thistles, sent his son to weed it, who, on seeing it so full of thistles, said to himself, 'How is it possible that I should ever do this?' and so he lay down to sleep, and slept many days. Then the father, coming up, inquired the reason, and, hearing it, said, 'Son, begin, and weed each day as much ground as you now measure with your body, and you will clear the whole easily.' The son did so. Now, then, follow this example, and so cultivate your mind, and it will be purified and restored†." Petrus à Curiacus, minister-general of the Order of the Trinity, in 1272, converted a clerk of scandalous life, addicted to drunkenness, by the earnestness of his personal appeal. He addressed him at first, we are told, with great sweetness, admonishing him; and then, not succeeding, he sent for him, presented him a crucifix, and spoke with such power on the passion of Christ, that the clerk vowed to correct his manners; and so effectually did he succeed, that he even entered the order in a convent of Savoy‡. A certain noble in France was so addicted to luxury and vice, that to the frequent remonstrances of St. Bernard he always replied, that he could not refrain from merely one sin. At length one day the saint said to him, "If you will not make peace with God, at least make a truce of three days, refraining from sin for that time for the love of God." He promised, and kept his word. Then the saint prevailed on him to prolong the truce for three more days for the love of blessed Mary; which he did. And afterwards the saint prayed him to add other three days for the love of all the saints; after keeping which, he came to the saint and said, "I do not wish now to keep merely a truce with God, but to make my peace with Him for ever." So he was converted from his heart, and he persevered to the end§. St. Peter of Alcantara used continually to exhort

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* Id. 171.

† Id. 426.

‡ Baron. Annal. ad S. Trin. 247.

§ Mag. Spec. 145.

persons of all kinds to make serious reflections on their state. He used to go forth into the fields and seek the shepherds and peasants, and into the streets of towns to teach the Christian doctrine to the poor and ignorant, and to the children; and he used to place himself in the midst of the poor who asked alms at the convent gate, in order to instruct and encourage them. Passing by the town of Baraco, entering the church, and praying before the blessed Sacrament, he produced such an impression by his looks, that many of the inhabitants were converted merely by seeing him*. When William of Paris exhorted the dying Phillip, chancellor and bishop of Amiens, to give proof of conversion by resigning all his benefices but one, he pledged himself that, if the other recovered, he would from his own property make compensation to him for all that he had given up†. We cannot wonder that the mere example or history of such men should determine the conversion of many. The blessed Francis of Navalcarnero, in Castille, was converted to a sense of the vanity of all human honours, which, as a learned man, he had coveted, in consequence of lighting by accident, one day while he was searching for another book, on a life of St. Francis of Assisium, whose example he thenceforth followed to the end of his life, dying a martyr of charity while serving the sick at Segovia, in the hospital, during a plague‡.

More generally, however, the penitents upon this road would refer us to the preaching of the Catholic priesthood as to the origin of their conversion. The venerable mother Antoinette, of the Assumption, of the third order of Mercy, had been in the world Donna Theresa de Roias d'Aguillar, of one of the noblest and richest families of Seville, and one of the most beautiful girls in Spain. Having lost her parents young, and being placed under governesses that yielded to all her pleasures, she gave herself up to vanity, and from the number of her admirers, who followed her even to the churches, showed an example that was deplored by religious persons. One day in Lent, Father de Velasco preaching on the conversion of St. Mary Magdalene, his words moved her to tears and profound compunction. On returning home, she laid aside her splendid dress, and the next morning, repairing to the father, disclosed to him her resolution to forsake the world, which she accomplished soon after in the Monastery of Mercy§. Don Francis Floriano, who, after serving in the court of Charles V., had retired to Placentia, in Estremadura, was converted by the sermons of St. Peter of Alcantara. Soon after, his brother, returning from Flanders, was

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* Marchèse, Vie de S. P. lib. iii. c. 7.

† Mag. Spec. 52.

‡ Hist. de l'Ordre de la Mercy, 584-5.

§ Id. 489.

shocked to find such an alteration in the house—so few servants, and these so poorly clad—the walls so bare—the rooms without any useless furniture—his brother and sister-in-law so modestly clad, and he expressed his indignation; but, being suddenly moved to assist at a sermon of the saint, he, too, was instantaneously converted to a religious life, in which he persevered with his brother and sister-in-law to the end of his life*. "In Clairvaux, about eleven years ago," says Cæsarius, "a certain monk named Henry died, truly a holy man; in body contracted and broken, but in heart dilated, having many consolations from God, and many revelations, being void of no spiritual grace. In the time of a general chapter, the abbots used to frequent this venerable man, whom he much edified by his discourse. Our Abbot Gerard was intimate with him, and heard from his own lips the whole order of his conversion. When St. Bernard preached the cross in the diocese of Constance, this Henry happened to be present. He was a rich and powerful man, having many castles, and with riches infinite crimes. Being moved at the sermon of the man of God, he said to him, 'My lord, if I were not afraid of that custom which is said to be in your order, of sending those who come to you indifferently to different regions, I would render myself up to you on the spot.' To whom the saint answered, 'I will not receive you under condition; but this I promise you, that, if you become a monk at Clairvaux, you will die there.' Shortly after, he gave himself up, and was made interpreter of the abbot, being skilled in both the French and Teutonic tongues. A certain bowman, his servant, a cruel man, and swift to shed blood, was so indignant at his conversion, that he attempted to kill the holy abbot, but was struck by the angel of the Lord while in the act of drawing the bow. Being restored by the saint, and converted, he was sent by him to the crusade, in which he passed to the Lord†." "There was a man," says another ancient author, "who would never hear the word of God preached; but one day, a certain celebrated preacher coming to the city where he dwelt, he was induced by others to assist at the sermon. The preacher, it is said, beheld him as if drawn by a long chain held by a demon, each link composed of his sins. The preacher then discoursed on each, and dwelt on the power of the demon in preventing men from hearing the word of God. The man, hearing that it was never too late to repent, began to weep through true contrition; and there are persons who say, that as one little tear fell on the chain, the preacher saw it snap instantly and set

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* Le Père Marchèse, Vie de S. P. i. 60.

† Cæsar. Heisterbachensis, Illust. Mirac. et Hist. Mem. lib. i. c. 16.

the man free*." An historian of the Dominicans relates another example. "When brother Reginald, the Dominican," saith he, "was preaching at Bologna, and converting many great masters and clerks, Master Moneta, who was then celebrated through all Lombardy, seeing the effects, began to fear much lest he himself might be caught; and therefore he avoided as much as possible hearing him, and warned all his scholars from going to his sermons. But on the feast of St. Stephen, as his scholars induced him to assist at the sermon, and he could not absent himself, he said, 'Let us, at all events, first go to mass.' They complying, he prevailed on them to hear, not only one, but three masses; so, going out at last to the sermon, the object he had at heart seemed obtained, for the church was so full that he could not enter it. Nevertheless, remaining at the door, he heard, and was captured by the first words, which were these:—'Ecce, inquit, video cœlos apertos. Lo still, and at this moment, the heavens are opened for all who will to enter. Let these wretched men, who are neglectful, see and fear, lest closing their hearts to God, and their mouth and their hands, they should close heaven against themselves, and be unable to enter. Why delay, dearly beloved?—Ecce, aperti sunt cœli.' After the sermon, Master Moneta, struck with compunction, went to him, and disclosed his state to him, and made his profession; and, being much involved with occupations, brother Reginald allowed him to remain for more than a year in his secular habit; yet not uselessly, for, as he had before prevented many from attending the sermons, so now he drew many, not only to sermons, but to the order. His merits afterwards as a holy friar cannot be adequately described†."

But now the scenery seems to present a certain new distinctive character, and we shall do well to take a hint from the old French forest-laws, which say that, when doubtful questions about boundaries arise, the inspectors should consult both the oldest persons of the country, and also young lads who are most familiar with such localities. By following this counsel, we shall soon learn that we enter on the path that especially belongs to those who are going to confession, which is a track much worn by aged and youthful feet; poets know it, as having met upon it Juliet and her Romeo; here we shall find that there are many lovely flowers to be gathered as we pass along it, the whole air, in fact, being rendered fragrant with their sweetness.

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* Mag. Spec. 154.

† Lib. Vit. Frat. Prædicat. p. iv. c. 10.

CHAPTER V.

THE ROAD OF THE CONFESSION-CELL.

It is a very secret and mysterious path which leads the wandering soul to peace. We come to a still more solemn part of the forest. Nothing more common, more familiar, than the word confession, to signify the pass through which the track winds here; but if we meditate on the causes which render necessary that practice, on the instruments employed in it, on the consequences which it produces—nay, one may add, on the traditions and histories connected with it—nothing can be found more profound, more admirable, more holy, and, perhaps, even in a literary and philosophical point of view, more curious and instructive.

Some objects will be familiar to those who pass; but, through regard for strangers, it will be well to neglect nothing. Passavanti says, that in the absence of a priest a sinner may confess to a laic as a proof of humility and a good intention; and that such a confession would have a certain efficacy; in which event the laic would, like the priest, be bound to secrecy[*]." Such is the doctrine of St. Thomas, as in the lines respecting confession,—

"Sacerdoti faciendam
Quin laicis, cum ferendam
Necessitas tulerit[†]."

Examples of this practice are found in history, of which the instance of Joinville, related with such simplicity by himself, will be remembered by many.

The confessionals, as now constructed, are not of ancient date. In an old miniature, the priest who receives the penitent, conducted by an angel, is seated on a little wooden stool. Such was the confessional of the fifteenth century, which no one, I suppose, would wish to restore, though in some places it can be still found; for when the stranger was at Loretto, on the fastival of the nativity of our Lady, the confessor sat thus on an open bench in the isle of the church, while the crowd, each one waiting for his turn, gathered close round him and the kneeling penitent. "Omnia fugere poterit homo præter cor suum," says

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[*] Specchio della vera Penitenza.

[†] Rhyth. Synops. v.

St. Isidore[*]. "A man can fly all things but the consciousness that to confession he is mysteriously prompted by his own heart. Quoniam tacui; that is, have not confessed, inveteraverunt omnia ossa mea dum clamarem tota die. Why," adds St. Isidore, "does he repent, having been silent? Because he did not confess his sins. Why does he grieve for having cried out? Because he defended evil. Quædam enim jam justitiæ portio est iniquitatem suam homini abscondere, et in semetipso de peccatis propriis erubescere. Peccatum perpetrare crimen est, peccatum prædicare clamor est. He who, therefore, defends his sins must repent, and accuse himself for having proudly done wrong[†]."

The cause that renders confession necessary lies buried very deep in the secrets of nature. In a legend in Cæsarius, we read that the devil was unable to repeat the three words to which a certain worldly knight owed his deliverance from him, who had died contrite, crying, "Domine, miserere mei." "How came that knight to escape from you?" some one asked the demon. "He said three cursed words," replied the fiend, "which delivered him from our hands, and which, if God would enable us to pronounce in the same manner as he did, we ourselves should be saved; but the power is taken from us." Alanus de Insulis says, that confession was instituted from the beginning of the human race—our first parents having been required to confess their sin, Cain being similarly required, and condemned for proudly refusing, in the words, "Nunquid custos Fratris mei sum ego?" whereas the serpent was not questioned, since by confession he could not be recalled to life[‡].

In a judiciary point of view, however, St. Thomas of Villanova dates the necessity of confession from the incarnation; for he says, "As long as God was not man, there was no need for man to confess his sins to man; but since God became man He has given all judgment to the Son, for He is appointed Judge of the living and the dead; and to Him, therefore, is man to render account of his sins. But, because Christ has ascended to heaven, He has delegated his priests to exercise that power, and declared in express terms that they have jurisdiction over sins, to bind and to loose. And oh! I wish you would understand what a great benefit and great mercy this was[§]." "In confession," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, who, writing in the eleventh century, might be called the historian of penitents, "the source of sin is weakened; temptation ceases, or is tempered; grace is

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[*] De Sum. Bon. ii. 26.
[†] Id. ii. 24.
[‡] Alani Mag. Lib. Pœnitentialis, 195.
[§] Dom. iii. Quad.

augmented; the mind is strengthened by advice; and the demon is enervated and confounded[*]."

A penitent leaving the confessional is like Rinaldo in the disenchanted forest of Armida, on that beautiful morning when the forest, instead of presenting its usual terrors, appeared to him singularly tranquil and pleasing. On returning to it, he now heard not dreadful thunder, but harmonies made up of all sorts of gentle and lovely sounds—brooks, whispering winds, nightingales, organs, harps, and sweet human voices. "Oh! that I might be able," exclaims St. Thomas of Villanova, "to persuade the whole kingdom and win back the Christian people to that ancient custom of confession, as in days of yore! If I thought I could succeed, I would apply myself to this one object alone. I wish you would try whether I say truly; then you would soon discover what consolation of mind results from this practice, what peace of conscience, what reformation of life, what confidence of pardon from God, what lightness of heart, what a change of person, what a facility in good works, what an increase in devotion, in tenderness of spirit, in vivacity of intelligence, in purity of conscience, and in all spiritual gifts which conduce to eternal salvation[†]." "Confession," says Cæsarius, "is a medicine both of soul and body, as several examples prove, which ought to be published; for there are many who, if they knew there was corporal utility in confession, would be more ready to have recourse to it[‡]." Alfonso Antonio de Sarasa shows how the practice of confession conduces to joy, which largely conduces to corporal health[§]. Alanus finds an analogy in forest-walks, and says,

"Non bene de pedibus spinæ tribulique trahuntur,
Dum brevis interius spina relicta jacet;
Quo mora major erit, tanto mage vulnera putrent,
Et tunc non possunt absque dolore trahi."

"Confessio et pulchritudo in conspectu ejus," on which words St. Augustin comments, saying, "Pulchritudinem amas? Confitere. Fœdus eras? Confitere ut sis pulcher. Peccator eras? Confitere ut sis justus[||]." If you need proof, compare the scene in churches where youth, in ranged companies, awaits the priest, with that in forums, where it is trained for the world; compare Tasso preparing to make his early communion with young companions, whose devout looks quite charm him with the poet of the world singing his remorseless confessions to the crowd. To

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[*] iv. 95. [†] Dom. iv. Quad. [‡] lib. iii. c. 14.
[§] Ars semper Gaudendi, p. ii. tract. xv.
[||] S. August. in Ps. xcv.

each disciple and imitator of the latter might be applied the words of Cicero, "Lateant libidines ejus illæ tenebricosæ, quas fronte et supercilio, non pudore et temperantia, contegebat *." Tasso composed verses before confession. "O Lord," he sings, "I turn to thee, already repenting of the desire which resists thy will; and by the grief which I feel for my faults I take vengeance on myself for my offences. Forgive, pardon them, now that I fear thy wrath is kindled by my sin. So shall the grief and fear which afflict me be changed into thy divine love." Oh! it is a great good when youth says then

——— "I have prayed
To God, and I have talked with my own heart,
And have unravelled my entangled will,
And have determined what is right."

I love the old forms of instruction, and question, not their substance. The intention to confess was said to render men invisible to the demon who had laid snares for them; and two examples are thus related in the Magnum Speculum:—"A youth about to commit a crime was moved by a vision of Christ to go to confession. Issuing from the wood with an intention to confess, he met the demon waiting for him; but the latter did not recognize him, and in reply said, 'You are not he whom I am waiting for; he is all mine, and I shall break his neck on this spot.' The youth, comprehending the mercy of God, withdrew into a cloister and there persevered †." Two brethren, wandering on mountains in Ireland, met a man of short stature, who fled from them as they asked the way; but, as they outran him, he began to tell them that for thirty years he served the demon, to whom he had made homage, and whose seal he bore on his hands. Struck with compunction at their holy words on hell and heaven, he promised them to confess his sins, and then the demon's seal was effaced from his hands. By their desire to prove the power of confession, he rode into the woods and waited for the demon, who came and replied to his question, "Do you not know me, your servant, these thirty years back?" "You lie, I never saw you; but I am looking for him who has my seal on his hands ‡." By a strange necessity the fierce antagonists of Catholicity have for some purpose of their own been heard to recommend its discipline of confession. "This," says one of them, "is as necessary and proper as instruction. For public preaching indeed is the gift of the Spirit, working as best seems to his secret will; but discipline is the practic work of preaching directed and applied, as is most requisite, to particular duty; without which it were all one to the benefit of souls, as it would

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* De Provinciis Consul.

† 132.

‡ 132.

be to the cure of bodies, if all the physicians in London should get into the several pulpits of the city, and, assembling all the diseased in every parish, should begin a learned lecture of pleurisies, palsies, lethargies, to which perhaps none there present were inclined; and so, without so much as feeling one pulse, or giving the least order to any skilful apothecary, should dismiss them from time to time, some groaning, some languishing, some expiring, with this only charge, to look well to themselves, and do as they hear *." In England the government, alarmed at the new career in morals which was laid open by abolishing Catholicism, required its subjects to return to the practice of confession. It was the same every where. Gustavus Wasa, observing the change of manners in Sweden consequent on the same emancipation, issued decrees on the 8th of June, 1544, commanding from his royal authority all his subjects to fast and pray, and give alms, and abstain from every sin. Again, in 1558, complaining that his former orders were neglected, he published a kind of pastoral letter, in which he acknowledged the deluge of iniquities that had resulted from the introduction of Lutheranism into Sweden, and again commanded his subjects to abstain from sins, and to lead good lives †. The result proved, however, that men cannot be rendered holy by royal proclamations. But let us return to observe the confessional, where kings and republican orders are unknown. "Human virtue," says St. Ambrose, "is a lamp which goes out sometimes, and leaves a fetid odour." In the sacrament of penitence it can be rekindled. "Remark," says St. Anthony of Padua, "that through many chambers can the demon have access to the house of our conscience, that is, our mind, but that only through one door can he be expelled, that is, the mouth, by confession. He can enter by the five senses, but only by the lips can he be ejected ‡." When, therefore, the demon has obtained possession of this castle, the first thing he does is to block up the way by which he could be driven out, that is, he makes man mute; for with this door closed he is secure in his possession §."

"Stultorum incurata pudor malus ulcera celat ||."

Sin and hellish obstinacy tie their tongues. We read in the Magnum Speculum, that a person possessed was led to a holy man, to whose questions the demon said, "We are three within him; I am called Claudens Cor, my office is to prevent men from having contrition; but, if I fail, then my brother, called Claudens Os, endeavours to prevent his confessing his sins; but,

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* Milton.
† Theiner, La Suède et le Saint Siège, i. 388.
‡ Dom. iii. in Quad.
§ Serm. Dom. iii. in Quad.
|| Hor. 1 Epist. xvi. 24.

if he confess and is converted, my third brother here, named Claudens Bursam, labours to prevent him from making restitution, filling his mind with the fear of poverty, and he succeeds more frequently than either of us, the other two *."

The difficulties and objections raised by some against confessing may be reduced thus to the operations of an invisible enemy, most active when he is unperceived. Some say, " I have no need to confess; I have not sinned :" for, as St. Odo, abbot of Cluny, remarks, " no one discovers his own obliquity till he begins to be made straight, since the man perverse cannot see his own perversity †." " Itinera insipientium recta in conspectu eorum ‡ ;" but even on their own hypothesis it is clear that the need of confession is not removed; for, supposing true all that they pretend, the obligation by a necessity of nature remains. Is the perfectly resigned man obliged to confess? is the question which Henry Suso proposes, and thus answers : " The confession which is of love is more excellent than that which is of sin §." Others are less sophistical with their own hearts, and only object through natural abhorrence of what humbles pride, saying, " And must I ravel out my weaved up follies? God can understand and pardon; why should I speak with man?" The worldly voices of the present day are as ancient as the fall, and they are as false as they are old. The restoration of minds to the state of grace is the great invisible ineffable result which by experience proclaims the truth and divine power of the Catholic religion. Human passions can assist no intelligence in forming an estimate of the patience and goodness which have wrought to make this attainable. It is related of the Florentine sculptor, Donatello, that having completed a bronze bust of exquisite beauty, and the merchant who had ordered it objecting to the price, saying that it might have cost the maker but little time and trouble, he turned about in great anger, telling the merchant that he had found means in the hundredth part of an hour to spoil the whole labour and cares of a year, and gave a blow to the bust, which fell to the street, and was dashed in pieces. Vasari adds, that, regretting what had happened, the merchant would then have paid him double the sum demanded, on condition of his reconstructing the bust, but that Donatello could not be persuaded to do this by all his promises; nor would he consent even at the request of Cosmo de Medicis. The Supreme exhaustless Artist does not act so with his own beautiful creations, when they are broken and defiled by an enemy. He reconstructs repeatedly his noblest work, that nature which was made in his own likeness,—

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* 153.

† Mor. in Job. lib. xxiv.

‡ Prov.

§ De Veritate Dialog. c. 12.

——— "quæ sola superni
Postulat artificis sensum, limamque requirit [*],"

and in the confessional, which might be termed the divine studio, restores man to his original image in purity and grace. Impatient mortals may wonder and exclaim; but, as Schiller says, "it is not for the eye of the pupil to comprehend at once the master's vast design." That such divine restorations are effected by means of the Catholic sacraments no one can deny without contradicting facts. This is part of experimental knowledge which no theorizing can overthrow. As far as relates to God the effect is complete, as are all the works of the Creator.

"Nullum solum hæc expurgat,
Sed oportet ut abstergat,
Aut nullum aut omnia [†]."

But the effect, as relates to man, may be interrupted by his own will, and therefore, as the same great voice continues,

"Jesu cor exorabile,
Esse vult iterabile
Sacramentum veniæ."

Without this provision, indeed, the divine institution would be frustrated of its aim; for, as the age of forest-trees can be ascertained by marking the number of concentric circles in the transverse section of the stem of the tree, so the age of man might generally be determined by reckoning the circling paths that he has taken round the centre. Catholicity exists by constant reforms, continual renovations. "No mortal," says the abbot Rupertus, "has ever existed in whom that Spirit, which is the substance of divine love, could rest perpetually with an eternal station, excepting that one man whom the seven women, that is, the seven graces of this Spirit, encompassed and always held; whence it was said, "Super quem videris Spiritum descendentem et manentem in eo." In the Church gifts are only dispensed successively to each separately, and hence the Holy Spirit is said to dwell in the Church [‡]. "Cantate Domino canticum novum; for," adds St. Gertrude, "every song with a devout intention is new, since always fresh grace must be obtained from God to have such an intention [§]." This explains the Catholic rule of life, the Catholic discipline, the Catholic custom. Hence we read that every week the hermits of Camaldoli confess their

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[*] Alani Encyclop. lib. vi. c. 6.

[†] Doct. Angel. Sum. Rhyth. Synopsis iv.

[‡] De Divinis Officiis, x. c. 21.

[§] Insin. Div. Piet. seu Vit. S. Gertrud. lib. iii. c. 30.

sins*, and we find that in the time of St. Columban, it was the custom of nuns to go to confession every day, the reason assigned being that the least things are to be disclosed. "Ergo nec ipsa parva à confessione sunt negligenda cogitata, quia scriptum est, qui parva negligit, paulatim defluit †."

"O Pater, O hominum—æterne creator,
Quot gradibus parcit pietas tua ! quis pater unquam
Sustinet erranti toties ignoscere nato !
Das genti sensum quo vel bona vel mala noscant ;
Non satis ; innectis servandæ vincula legis,
Proponisque malis pœnas, et præmia justis.
Hæc quoque quis sprevit ? redeat quandoque libebit,
In promptu venia est ; sanctum putet ecce lavacrum
Quod renovet vitam, veteresque obliteret actus,
Quodque novos homines faciat. Quid quærimus ultra ?
Et tamen ulterior venia est ; violaverit ullus
Hoc quoque polluto prolapsus corpore donum.
Quamquam jam nimius longe processerit error,
Desinat et redeat ; quum se damnaverit ipse,
Absolvi meruit : si pœnitet, irrita culpa est,
O vere, quod ais, pondus leve ! quodque cohæret,
Suave jugum ! toties homini quum ignoscitur uni,
Et tamen erramus, finis nec criminis ullus
Humano generi ! sed crescit laus tua ; nam, quo
Major culpa rei, parcentis gloria major ‡."

Here we may notice the objection to Catholic morality as upheld in the confessional, which is supported by an appeal to the facts of men returning to the sins for which they have sought and obtained pardon. "But it is not so much the number of our defeats," says a profound writer refuting it, "as the order in which they have succeeded, that we ought to consider ; for ten faults committed without interruption, without any protest by the will, have far worse consequences than a much greater number of faults separated by sincere attempts at returning to God. It is defeats following each other without interruption which destroy the moral sense, all confidence, and all energy §." Undoubtedly man can abuse Christ's holy sacraments as he can abuse every thing. The analogy of nature leads us to expect this; "for what doth cherish weeds but gentle air?" and trees themselves experience such prodigies, if what Pliny says be true, that bitter apples sometimes come from stems that should bear

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* Constitut. Eremitarum S. Romuald. c. 1.

† Regula S. Donati, cap. xxiii. Regula cujusdam, c. vi. ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg.

‡ S. Paulin. Nolan. Poem. vi. de S. Joann. Bapt. ap. id. 223.

§ St. Foix.

sweet, and sweet from bitter, "Gravi ostento, cum in deteriora mutantur *." Speaking of Carlsbad, a French author makes the remark, that the spectacle of a burial-ground in places consecrated to health is melancholy. No doubt it is sad to contemplate the numbers that have slept the evil sleep without benefiting by the spiritual water provided for their disease in the sacred rites of Catholicity; but, if the confessional should be renounced in consequence of its liability to abuse, men should be warned no less from hearing the discourse of our Lord in the Gospel of St. Luke, respecting the greater joy which is in heaven, "super uno peccatore pœnitentiam agente quam super nonaginta novem justis qui non indigent pœnitentia." Men may equally abuse themselves by taking a false advantage of both. "It is a reprobate sense," says Cæsarius, "when he, who before was better than the good, afterwards becomes worse than the evil †." Such persons, it is true, may be seen gathered round the Catholic Church; for whither fly the gnats but to the sun? but holy things and holy words betray only light men that would be betrayed without these. If we take a candle into the forest on a summer's night, how many flies and insects fly round it till they are consumed. So congregate bad spirits in this benighted world round the light of faith; and every Catholic Church and every confessional may have ruffians and traitors kneeling hypocritically, like Reynard the fox in the old history, near it. Thus hath the candle singed the moth. O these deliberate fools! Catholicism is not responsible for such deaths. It leaves no one in ignorance of its doctrine, saying, in old Roman words, "Nolite id velle quod fieri non potest; et cavete, ne spe præsentis pacis perpetuam pacem amittatis ‡;" or with the poet,

"Oh, then beware!
Those wounds heal ill that men do give themselves;
Omission to do what is necessary
Seals a commission to a blank of danger,
And danger, like an ague, subtly taints
Even then when we sit idly in the sun."

When Simon, Henry III.'s envoy, proposed to the chapter of St. Alban's to succour the king with money forbidden them by the Church to alienate, saying that they could be absolved afterwards, the monks replied, "It would not be wise to have one's self excommunicated and absolved at one and the same time, no more than it would be wise to obey a quack who should say to us, 'Break your leg, or any other limb, and I have an excellent surgeon who can set it immediately.' Besides that we

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* Nat. Hist. lib. xvii. 38.

† lib. i. c. 2.

‡ Phil. vii.

should by so doing sin in every way, beginning with a wilful lie *." Anticipating the objection that men will multiply their sins in hopes of remission, Dom Montegut, of Mountserrat, replies, "Nay, they multiply them much more, in despair of pardon †." O London, say if these words be false! As for less extreme cases of self-deception, the Church supplies all her children with sufficient warnings, repeating words like those of the chaplain of Drontheim to Sintram, "Now thou hast thrown thyself back for years. Think, my son, on the shortness of man's life; if thou art always falling back anew, how wilt thou ever gain the summit on this side the grave?" "Whoever weeps for his former faults," says St. Isidore, "must beware of again committing them,—Væ mihi misero Isidoro, qui et pœnitere retro acta negligo, et adhuc pœnitenda committo ‡." As St. Thomas of Villanova says, alluding to the fate of Lot's wife, "If such be the penalty of looking back, what should we not fear for those who return back §?" Of what avail then, do you ask, are former absolutions? St. Thomas answers you,—

> "Dimissum crimen non redit,
> Sed sequens gravius reddit
> Ex ingratitudine ||."

But, leaving objectors now to themselves, let us pause to mark these confessionals more minutely, that the attraction of the Catholic faith, and the signal to its divine truth by means of them, may be more fully estimated.

"Have you ever examined to the bottom," demands a deep French writer, "the sense of this word confessor—this divine friend, friendship raised to a sacrament, found in every church seated, waiting for you?—this man, this stranger to whom you open the book of your conscience, in whom you have more confidence than in all the world besides? Confession, as established in the Catholic Church, is alone of itself a sufficient proof of the divinity of our religion. Such an institution could only come from God ¶." The concessions and reflections of philosophers without the Church, on this subject, are often remarkable. Goethe, for instance, had manifestly avenues to Catholicism thrown open to him by means of the confessional. "In the infinite confusion," he says, "in which the young man must entangle himself, an admirable expedient is given him, in confessing his deeds and misdeeds, his infirmities and doubts, to a worthy

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* Mat. Paris, ad ann. 1258.

† Réflexions sur les Indulgences de Montserrat.

‡ De Summo Bono, ii. 16.

§ De Div. August. ii.

|| iv.

¶ St. Foix, Les Heures sérieuses d'un jeune Homme.

man, appointed expressly for that purpose, who knows how to calm, to warn, to strengthen him, to chasten him likewise by symbolical punishment, and at last, by a complete washing away of his guilt, to render him happy, and to give him back, pure and cleansed, the tablet of his manhood. In heavenly things we have never finished learning. The higher feeling within us which often finds itself not even truly at home, is, besides, oppressed by so much from without, that our own power hardly administers all that is necessary for counsel, consolation, and help. But to this end that remedy is instituted for our whole life, and this man is continually waiting to show the right way to the wanderers, and to relieve the distressed. But these spiritual wonders spring not like other fruits from the natural soil, where they can be neither sown, nor planted, nor cherished. We must supplicate for them from another region. Here we meet the highest of them, the priestly mission. This great boon, bound up with a heavy duty, is not a natural gift. It must be communicated to others by one authorized person to another, and the greatest good that a man can attain, without his having to obtain it by his own grasping, must be preserved and perpetuated on earth by spiritual heirship, and thus the priest steps forth in the line of his predecessors and successors so much the more gloriously, as it is not he, the priest, whom we reverence, but his office; it is not his nod to which we bow the knee, but the blessing which he imparts, which seems the more holy, and to come the more immediately from heaven, because the earthly instrument cannot at all weaken or invalidate it by its own sinful, nay, wicked nature. How is all this," he adds in conclusion, "shattered to pieces in Protestantism, by declaring it either apocryphal or uncanonical!" So its fond poet says, lamentingly,

"Each has his world of thought alone
To one dread watcher only known.
  And far and wide,
  On every side,
Our dreams dart on—no earthly guide *."

In the forest, indeed, we find the flower that is called self-heal by our rustics; but in the flora of the moral world there is nothing analogous to what that name implies. We tread mysterious and thrice holy ground; but nothing like what so often ties the tongue of the Father of History forbids us to speak of the tone and style of the priest in his confessional, yielding, as it does, such a signal, to the truth of which he is the high commissioned minister. The instructions, indeed, given to him on this head by the Church are not deficient. To observe

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* Lyra Innocent.

some, men may be referred to our most common books, but such as belong to our purpose may briefly be pointed out here without, I hope, incurring blame. Truly striking is the contrast to what we shall shortly hear, when we listen to the lessons of philosophers, and to the theory propounded by heretical doctors for guiding the souls of penitents, as when Milton describes his minister searching the tenderest angles of the heart; one while shaking his stubbornness with racking convulsions nigh despair, other whiles with deadly corrosives griping the very roots of his faulty liver to bring him to life through the entry of death. Not so the true Church's priest. In the ninth century we find him thus admonished:—"Interroga blande leniterque. Then say, Frater noli erubescere peccata tua confiteri; nam et ego peccator sum, et fortassis pejora quam tu feceris habeo facta *."

Goethe, too, like Milton, had experience of confession as it was recognised and practised by such Protestants as did not wholly reject the discipline; and he lets us into the secrets of what Lutheranism gave him under this name. "We were taught," he says, "that we were much better than the Catholics, and that we were not obliged to acknowledge any thing in particular in the confessional—nay, that this would not be at all proper, even if we wished to do it. This last," he adds, "did not seem right to me."

Catholicity comprises the requisite assistance, which he thus instinctively desired, with a discretion which had left nothing for the heretics of late times to object to with justice.

In the eleventh century, we find a caution thus expressed by Cæsar of Heisterbach:—"The priest knows how to dig the wall, and to show the idols that are painted in the heart †; but the confessor should beware lest, uncautiously digging the wall, that is, interrogating the conscience, he should teach sins not known to it before ‡." "The wall is to be dug, but so that the house should not fall; idols are to be sought for under the strewings, but not so that the tabernacle be overthrown §." Alanus de Insulis warns the confessor from giving occasion to sin by indiscreet questions ‖; and Passavanti, in later times, deprecating a neglect of this prudence, confirms his wise counsels by citing the narrative of a nun, Beatrix, at Cologne, whose fall was occasioned by a neglect of them, and whose miraculous recovery was recorded for a lesson to all confessors for ever ¶.

But let us hear the mild entreaties of him the Roman orator would so extol—qui erranti comiter monstrat viam. Poets

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* Regino Abb. Prum. de Eccles. Discip. lib. i. 40.

† Ezech. viii. ‡ iii. 44. § Lib. iii. 45.

‖ Alani Magni Pœnitentialis, 186.

¶ Specchio della vera Penitenza.

only paint what every penitent has known. There he kneels, and the revered sire speaks to him in such words as,—

——— "Oh, my child,
Hide not in proud impenetrable grief
Thy sufferings from my ear."

"Nam ille," as St. Isidore says, "qui nos malos tolerat, non dubium est quod conversis clementer ignoscat*." The priest in the confessional seems to involve two men; the one before sin committed, to warn and to threaten—the other after its committal, to console and to encourage. "I asked," says Marina de Escobar, "which was the happier—the soul that never sinned, or that which rose again with great fervour and penance? I was directed to avoid such considerations; and I heard these words:—'If you saw two precious vessels—one of purest gold, without sculpture of any kind, and another of less pure gold, but exquisitely wrought and adorned with gems—which would you prefer?' I replied, that I would prefer having never offended God, though I should have fewer grades of glory than to have offended Him and possess more. The Lord made me no answer, but was silent." And Lewis de Ponte adds this note:—"I think this silence was to show, that though the Divine Majesty permits falls, and elicits even sometimes great good from our little evils, yet that we cannot commit any sin, however small, with the hope of drawing gain from it, since the hope may evidently fail, and only confusion follow†." This is the first voice, before sin, of warning; but that which succeeds, where occasion may arise, is this:—

"Be cheerful; wipe thine eyes;
Some falls are means the happier to arise."

Above all, no despair. Think evil of me if thou willest, but never so of thyself as to grow reckless. Let what will happen, rise always to renew the combat. Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure; the Church is patient. The mediæval public was conversant with such prudence; and so Joseph of Arimathea says to Pilate in the Old Mystery,—

"Si tu veis que tu as mesfait
Cri-lui merci; si fras bon plait.
Nul ne lui crie qui ne l'ait,
Nis icels qui à mort l'ont trait."

Examples of this mildness in confessors, and of the consequences, abound in the old literature. "The Dean of Bonn,"

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* De Sum. Bon. ii. 15.

† Vit. Marinæ, p. i. lib. i. c. 10.

says Cæsarius, "while parish priest of St. Martin's, in Cologne, was one day in Lent sitting in the church hearing the confession of an old woman, when he saw opposite to him two of his parishioners sitting in a window telling idle fables, of whom one was a usurer, and the other a known murderer. The old woman having gone, the usurer coming to confess, the priest said to him, 'Friend, let you and I trick the devil this day. Do you only confess your sins, laying aside the will of sinning, and acquiesce in my counsel, and I promise you eternal life; and I will give you an easy penance.' He well knew under what vice he laboured. The other said that he would willingly; and so, having been dismissed, he accosted the murderer, saying, 'Truly we have a gentle priest, for by the sweetness of his words he has moved me to penitence.' The other was so encouraged on hearing this, that he, too, went to confession; and the result was the same, exemplifying the happy effects of wisdom in a confessor*."

We have marked the confessor: but what devolves upon the penitent the while? First, sincerity. Amphimedon, though in the other world, makes but a lame confession when interrogated by Agamemnon; or rather, he makes no mention whatever of his guilt, and of that of his accomplices the suitors†. Every Shakspearean student is aware that this prudence would be sheer folly in the Church. He remembers the words that express what every Catholic knows. "Be plain and homely," says the friar of the poet;—

"Riddling confession finds but riddling shrift."

The Church repeats to all the warning expressed by Alanus Magnus in the lines,—

"Quid prodest medicum plagas sanasse ducentas,
Si maneat quædam quâ moriatur homo?"

Every Catholic child can say when he kneels here,—

"Thou knowest all—I have unclasp'd
To thee the book even of my secret soul."

Difficulties, temptations there may be; instances of them are recorded by old Catholic writers. "Some think," says the author of Magnum Speculum, "that they have confessed well; but the demon has his little tablet, in which some things are written that he hopes to produce against them on the day of judgment as not having been either confessed or washed away by contrition‡." In the beautiful old mystery of the Empereriss

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* Lib. iii. c. 50. † Lib. xxiv. 100. ‡ 128.

of Rome, the Emperor's brother cannot be cured of his leprosy by the Empress, who possessed an infallible specific, because he had kept secret in confession his own treason against her. "Lords," she says, seeing the inefficiency of her medicine, "certainly he has kept secret some crime in his confession." "Is that the reason?" replies the wretch; "then, friend, be it so; for, to be brief, I would rather turn all to corruption, and so die, than tell to any man what I have secret in my bosom,—

"'Or demeure donc en ce point,
Qu'en cest estat mourir pourray;
Mais jà ne le revelleray
A homme né.'"

There are such lame and impotent confessions still made by some who use the very same word "man," implying their ignorance or rejection of Catholic theologic truth. But, if you would mark how these temptations are conquered, there is a voice from the tomb that can instruct you. There is an immortal page in modern French literature describing such a moment in the college life of a youth who, in old age, relates it thus:—"'Have you concealed nothing?' said the man of God to me. 'No, my father.' I replied to each question, 'no, my father.' He, sad, mournful, doubting, sighing, replied by looking through me to the depths of my soul. At last he dismissed me, and I left his presence pale and disturbed as a criminal. I was to receive absolution on Holy Wednesday. The day arrived. I was led to the church. My knees trembled under me. I threw myself at the priest's feet—I could hardly repeat the Confiteor. 'Well, have you forgotten nothing?' said the man of Jesus Christ to me. I was silent: his questions recommenced, and the fatal 'No, my father,' escaped from my lips. He drew himself up to reflect. He took counsel of Him who conferred on the apostles the power of binding and loosing. Then, making a last effort, he prepared to give me absolution. At that moment, the lightning of heaven striking me would have caused less terror in my soul. I cried out, 'I have not said all.' This terrible Judge, this Delegate of the Supreme Arbitrator, whose countenance inspired me with such fear, became the most tender pastor; he embraced me, and wept. 'Come, then, dear child,' said he, 'take courage!' I shall never experience such another moment in my life. If one relieved me from the weight of a mountain, one could not have consoled me more. I sobbed with joy. It was from that hour that I was created an honest man. If I suffered so much for concealing some puerile weakness, what would have been the remorse of a crime! I felt I should never have survived it. But how divine is this religion, which seizes thus upon our good faculties! What moral pre-

cepts will ever supply the place of these Christian institutions[*]?" The child enjoys the light of the sun, though he has never learned, like the philosopher, to distinguish all the properties of its divided beams. St. Thomas requires sixteen or seventeen conditions to constitute a good confession, which are expressed in these verses, in the fourth book of Sentences, thus :—

"Sit simplex, humilis confessio, pura, fidelis ;
Atque vera, frequens, nuda, discreta, libens, verecunda ;
Integra, secreta, lacrymabilis, accelerata,
Fortis et accusans et sit parere parata."

Some of these are specified as necessary, others as of perfection ; all belong to the sacramental grace mystically or orally taught. Among the former two may be observed more clearly as yielding proof of the divinity of all that passes between the penitent and the priest. "I have heard," says Calderon, "that there is a plant of so rare and singular a property, that where there is a wound it heals it ; and, where there is not, it makes one." Thus in the wood is found a symbol of the confessional ; for, where there is the wound, it heals it ; and, where there is no contrition, it forms it, fostering "that kindly grief which re-espouses us to God[†]." "The first sign of infused charity," says St. Bonaventura, "is grief for past sin, because charity and sin are incompatible. Then follows another sign, which is, when any one is made sad by the spiritual defects, or joyful by the spiritual proficiency of others[‡]." "Four things," says Cæsarius, "concur in the justification of a sinner : the infusion of grace ; the movement arising from grace and free will ; contrition ; and remission of sins. Contrition arises partly from the fear of hell, and partly from love of the celestial country. Such is the virtue of contrition, that without it, in adults who have added actual to original sin, baptism is fruitless, confession sterile, satisfaction useless. Contrition in the non-baptized is first baptism ; in the baptized, after falling, second baptism[§]."

Descending to the popular ear, we find this truth in the thirteenth century thus delivered :—"Dear sister," says the author of the Ménagier de Paris, "whatever man or woman wishes to confess to the saving of the soul should know that three things are necessary, namely, contrition, confession, and satisfaction ; and the first requires grief of heart—douleur de cuer en grans gémissemens et repentances ; and let the sinner know, that without contrition his prayer is worth nothing, since he has his thought and heart elsewhere. Alas ! if a man were in danger of being fined, or being hanged on a gibbet, and

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[*] Chateaubriand.

[†] Dante, Purg. 23.

[‡] De Septem Itin. Æternitatis.

[§] Lib. ii. c. 1.

judged in this mean world by some little provost, and that he knew he could escape by having contrition, how he would pray from his heart, and weep and groan; and yet he cannot pray, and weep, and groan from his heart, before the great Lord and Sovereign and Creator, who, from the high windows of his providence, sees all the affections in the sinner's heart! See, then, dear sister, what comparison is this! and judge how much better it is by true contrition to appease Him who has sovereign power, and who can inflict eternal judgments. What account shall we be able to give of the goods of fortune and of nature which he has committed to us! What alms have we given? and, if we be asked concerning our soul, what report can we make of that? And if we be asked concerning our heart and our body, which is the castle that he has commissioned us to keep, holding watch and ward, and which, perhaps, we have betrayed to his enemy, the devil of hell, what excuse shall we have? Certes, if the blessed Virgin Mary, his Mother, do not succour us as advocate, I do not see how we can escape being sentenced to the eternal gibbet of hell as traitors, if the hot tears of the contrition of our heart do not chase the enemy out of us in this life; as hot water drives the dog out of the kitchen. Remember, also, that you must not delay confession after sinning, but apply it instantly. Beggars know how needful it is to show their sores day after day to gain the alms of the charitable, and the wounded to submit their afflicted part daily to the surgeon. So should we confess often. Remember, too, that in confession nothing must be omitted. If the proud heart cannot endure it, let the sinner make the sign of the cross on his mouth, that the enemy who stops it may fly away; for, if he remains obdurate, all his subsequent confessions and good works will avail him nothing*." The peasant and the king knew, and know still, equally these great principles. Simon, Count of Leicester, disputing with Henry III., and provoked by the conduct of the king, cried out, "Who can believe that you are a Christian? Have you ever been to confession?" "Yes," replied the king. "But," retorted the count, "what is confession, without contrition and satisfaction†?" What keeps off bad Catholics from the confessional at present? The same knowledge.

"Apud justum," says St. Isidore, "recordatio peccati facit tædium animi‡." Whatever belongs to contrition must be divine, as Father Raymond argued respecting the visions of St. Catharine of Sienna; for the demon cannot be the author of true contrition. To want this is to want the matter of the sacrament conferred in penitence. "Nihil pejus," says St. Isidore, "quam culpam

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* Le Ménagier de Paris, D. i. a. 3.

† Mat. Paris, ad ann. 1252.

‡ De Sum. Bon. ii. 24.

agnoscere nec deflere*." But all have it not, and some even pronounce it superstitious, while they strive to sit with eagle stateliness upon remembered sin. The poet of life again can be cited, where his culprit says to himself,—

"You have sinned. What then? What rests?
Try what repentance can; what can it not?
Yet what can it when one can not repent?"

Oh, wretched state! Old records furnish many instances. There are eyes which never shed remorseful tear; there are tears which never had contrition for their source. Cæsar of Heisterbach relates, that a canon of Paris who lived viciously fell sick, and, after having demanded and received with devotion the sacraments of the Church, evincing by tears great contrition as it was thought, passed from this life to the other. Some days after, he appeared to one of his brethren under a sombre and terrific form, lamenting grievously, and saying that he was damned. His brother asked with great sorrow what was the cause, since, though a sinner and lover of the world, he had confessed and received the other sacraments, and shown great sorrow and contrition. He replied, "Woe is me, because I wanted the chief thing, without which nothing else avails, namely, contrition of heart. Though I wept, and evinced sorrow at the hour of my death, it was not a true sorrow of contrition by the love of God my Saviour, nor a firm resolution of amendment if I survived; but I wept through fear and sorrow at leaving the things of this world, which I loved." So saying, he disappeared with cries of anguish†. A certain son prayed daily for his father's soul, and at length beheld him encircled with flames; and when he asked how he came to be still in torment after all his prayers, "Because," replied the apparition, "while praying thou wert in mortal sin." "How so," asked the son, "since I went to confession, and received the communion every year?" The father answered, "You made unworthy communions; for your contrition and confession were false; because not from charity, but from a certain custom, you used to go to confession; and even then deferring it to the last week of Lent. Therefore your prayers were never heard." The vision converted the son, who thenceforth served God devoutly‡. Speaking of one who had committed suicide, Cæsarius says, "Of this person, a certain wise man, who knew him well, said in my hearing, 'I do not believe that he ever perfectly made his

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* De Sum. Bon. ii. 13.

† Passavanti, Specchio della vera Penitenza.

‡ Mag. Speculum, 133.

confession. For God, though by his just judgment he sometimes permits just men fearing him to incur danger in their sense, yet never does he permit them to finish by such a miserable death*.' " But let us hear him relate another instance. "Brother Bernard, our monk, related to me the fall of the steward of a certain rich man, who, after sinning, did not wish to rise; and perchance did not wish, because he could not, not being able, from not having the gift of contrition in his heart. The name of the man was Hildebrand, living in Holchovn. One day being in a wood with another, with whom he had an ancient quarrel, by the devil's instigation he rose on him and killed him. When the crime was known, he was arrested on suspicion, and, being interrogated, his countenance so betrayed him, that he was unable to deny his guilt; so he was sentenced to perish on the wheel. Meanwhile, Bertolph and John, two priests of the town, took him aside, and exhorted him to confession and contrition; but he miserably answered, 'What could that profit me? I am condemned;' thus replying as a man hardened and desperate. After his death, he appeared all encompassed with flames to Bertolph sleeping, while round the house in which he lay there was such a tempest and crash of trees, that even animals in the stables were terrified. He declared that he was eternally condemned on account of his despair in his last moments. The vision had such an effect on Bertolph, that he renounced the world and took the habit of our order in Hersethusis†."

But, leaving these sad examples, "let us our hallowed paths resume," as Dante says,—

"Eyeing the prostrate shadows, who renew
Their custom'd mourning‡."

"Adducam eos per torrentem aquarum in via recta," says the sacred text§, which is interpreted as signifying the torrent of contrition and penance. The world passes by the confessional, heeding little these women, these men and children, whose faces cannot be seen as they bend downwards. Angels with rapture watch them. "Minima contritio," says Cæsarius, "maximam delet culpam, perfecta vero culpam simul tollit et pœnam||." Running to the sepulchre, Peter acts as if he had not sinned; "and the reason was," says the Perè de Ligny, "that he was penitent, and he knew sufficiently the heart of his master to feel no doubt but that the penitent sinner would find as much favour as if he had never sinned."

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* iv. c. 44.

† Lib. ii. c. 6.

‡ Purg. 20.

§ Hierem.

|| Lib. ii. c. 1.

"Non est quisquam in damnatis
Qui bonæ sit voluntatis,
Quem culpæ pœniteat [*]."

On a former road we saw how much the hopes for the eternal state of men of yore in heathen times depended on the proof of their having had contrition. It was with a view to the possibility of all obtaining it, that many of the fathers supposed probable the salvation of Nabuchodonosor. "Such power has repentance with God," as St. Cyrill of Jerusalem remarks, "that Collius thinks it nearly certain he was saved; only through reverence for St. Jerome and St. Chrysostom, who held the contrary opinion, one ought not," he says, "to pronounce upon it absolutely [†]." "Hence too it is the constant tradition of the Church that Adam was saved [‡]." The salvation of Sampson, also a question in the schools, is left dependent on the same considerations. The angelic doctor thinks it probable, from St. Paul having named him with saints [§]. The salvation of Salomon, also often discussed, involves the same inquiry. The holy fathers in general leave it involved in doubt. Favourable to a belief of it are St. Epiphanius, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Cyrill of Jerusalem, St. Hilary, Bachiarius, St. Thomas, Petrus Comestor, Vincent of Beauvais, St. Bonaventura, Cardinal Hugo, and many others, with whom Collius agrees. While, on the contrary, it seemed hopeless to St. Cyprian, St. Gregory, Theodoret, Prosper, Eucherius, Bede, Raban, Sozomen, and others [‖].

But, descending now to Christian ages, let us mark the fruits sown from contrition in the heart, which are known to be of more pleasing savour than those which all the trees of Paradise could have produced ere man was fallen from innocence. "It is now about two-and-twenty years ago," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "more or less, at the time when I came to the order, which was in the year 1201, that the following event took place at Paris, as I have been assured by learned and religious men, abbots and scholastics. There was a certain youth, a student, who, at the suggestion of the enemy of the human race, had committed some sins which he was ashamed to confess: though the fear of hell, and the thought of heavenly joys for ever lost, so tormented his mind, that his health sunk under it. At length, by God's mercy, that servile fear overcame shame, so that, coming to St. Victor, he asked to see the prior, and intimated that he

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[*] Doct. Ang. Sum. Theolog. v.

[†] De Animabus Paganorum, p. ii. lib. ii. 5.

[‡] Id. II. iv. c. 1.

[§] Cap. xi. ad Hebræos, II. lib. iv. c. 5.

[‖] De Animab. Paganorum, p. ii. lib. iv. c. 8,

came to confess. The prior, like all the brethren of that monastery, ever ready for that office, immediately came to the place, and after an exhortation waited for the youth to begin. You will wonder; but the same hour, the pious Lord, whose nature is goodness, whose will is power, and whose work mercy, gave such contrition to his heart, that as often as he began to confess, his sobs interrupted his words, and he could not speak. After some time the prior said to the scholar, 'Go, write your sins on a schedule, and bring it to me.' The other went, wrote down his sins, returned the next day, and, after again failing to confess through the same impediment, handed in the paper. The prior, on reading it, said he wished to consult the abbot, and asked if he might show it to him. The youth consented. The prior came to the abbot, and, after relating what had occurred, gave him the schedule to read. The abbot opened it; but, lo! all the writing was effaced, as if to fulfil the words in Isaiah, 'Delevi ut nubem iniquitates tuas, et quasi nebulam peccata tua.' The youth after this resurrection led a perfect life, having been perfected by charity*." Philip, count of Namur, son of Baldwin, count of Flanders, was so contrite in his last sickness, that he caused himself to be carried into the poorest house that could be found in the city, from which, being truly poor in spirit, he migrated to the Lord†. To the venerable Peter de Corboel, archbishop of Sens, a sinner who had committed a horrible crime came imploring to be heard in confession, and having confessed with immense contrition, being assured by the prelate, in reply to his question whether he could hope for pardon, that God would accept his contrition, and being enjoined a penance of seven years, he implored the prelate to augment it, saying that his whole life would not be sufficient. The prelate then told him to depart, and only fast three days on bread and water. Then, he weeping and imploring him to impose a salutary penance, the bishop finally imposed on him to say but one Pater Noster; on hearing which sentence he groaned, and falling on the earth, expired, leaving the bishop assured of his salvation by the immensity of his contrition‡.

Dante had some experience of this state, and says,—

—— "Each thing else, the more
Its love had late beguiled me, now the more
Was loathsome. On my heart so keenly smote
The bitter consciousness, that on the ground
O'erpowered I fell; and what my state was then
She knows, who was the cause§."

He sees proof of late but effectual repentance. Giacopo del

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* Lib. ii. c. 10.

† Lib. ii. c. 18.

‡ Mag. Spec. 575.

§ Purg. 31.

Cassero, Buonconte de Montefeltro, and Pia are examples*. In the Magnum Speculum such instances are multiplied. Let us mark a few. A certain youth of bad manners was accused by his own relations, who desired to get rid of him, and, being condemned by the judge, he was put into a sack and secretly thrown into the water. That night he stood by the bed of his judge, who thought him certainly condemned, and now asked him concerning his state. The youth replied, that, though in torments, he had died in grace, for that, at the moment of being inclosed in the sack, he felt more horror at the thought of his sins than for his death, and that he uttered this prayer, "O pietatis fons indeficiens, et sceleribus mortalium bonitas invincibilis, pone crucem et mortem tuam inter peccata mea et justitiam tuam," and with these words, forgiving his enemies, he expired. The judge, hearing this, stood astonished at such ineffable mercy. "What!" he exclaimed, "has God pardoned you—you profligate, so vile, and promised you an eternal kingdom?" "Even so," replied the youth. Then the judge burst into tears, and said then, "Despair avaunt! God, who has pardoned such a youth, can also pardon me." The drowned youth vanished, and the judge, thenceforth renouncing the courts, laid aside all his state, left the world, and entered the Carthusian order. In the monastery one day conversing with another monk, he lamented, weeping, how many innocent persons he had condemned to die when a judge. "Oh, wretched man," he cried, "whither shall I fly in that day, when summoned before the eternal Judge†?" We read in the book De Septem Donis, that a certain robber, flying from his enemies, and seeing that he could not escape from their hands, prostrated himself on the ground in form of a cross, saying that he was resigned to die, as he merited death, and even desired them to cut him in pieces. It was revealed to a hermit who dwelt near the spot that this robber for his great contrition had obtained salvation ‡. Shakspeare, whose piercing eye takes in all things rightly at a glance, paints the contrite and their true spirit. Leontius, when his jealousies are proved unfounded, says to his revilers,—

"Go on, go on; thou canst not speak
Too much; I have deserved all
Tongues to talk their bitterest."

But this state has soon its mystic consolations, as in an instance thus related. "A certain brother, very contrite for his sins and inconsolable, sciens nimirum confessionem oris absque contritione cordis ad promerendam veniam minus sufficientem coram Deo judicari; and when he had tasted for a long time the will

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* Id. 5.

† Id. 154.

‡ i. 577.

of the fear of God, in which are written lamentations and woes, by divine grace inspiring him, the book of the charity of God, in which a new song is written, was unfolded to him, causing devotion in his heart as sweet as honey; for he began to understand that the sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit, and that a humbled heart God will not despise; for he saw our Lord in a vision, vested as if to say mass, and as often as he turned to the people, lifting up the chalice, he offered himself to be seen, and that chalice, he was led to know, contained the tears with which Mary Magdalen had washed his feet *." This contrition of penitents, this sorrow productive of a hope which may be taken as an earnest of eternal joy, refers us to Catholicity as to its only regular and constant source. Indeed, in these days, the rationalism allied with Protestantism flings it to the winds. "No man," says a distinguished guide of the new civilization, "can afford to waste his moments in compunctions." He seems to forget that nature contrives to oblige men to waste much of their precious time thus, doing penance of a certain kind for their sins, however little they may wish to have to do with them. These are the sophists who at last succeeded in rendering Goethe ashamed of the scruples of his youth, till at last, he says, he left completely behind him this strange anguish of conscience, together with church and altar; and by degrees the epoch arrived when all authority vanished from before him.

But to return to the confessional, where the men that so taught him pass by scorning those who gather round it. Another condition required, then, in this tribunal is a renouncement of the will of sinning; but this is not so hard to those who are led by experience to discover that such a will is woe. From the divine questions, "Quid tibi vis faciam? vis sanus fieri?" and "Quid vultis ut faciam vobis?" theologians infer the necessity of man co-operating to his own cure by wishing it. "Hominis est præparare cor †." "The second sign of infused charity," says St. Bonaventura, "is a firm resolution of avoiding sin in future ‡." "Charitas et peccandi voluntas simul inesse non possunt," says Cæsarius §; which is a sentence that certain philanthropists would do well to consider. After relating a certain narrative he proposes this question: "As the knight had confessed his sins, how came the devil to have cognizance of them?" The answer is, "Because the knight had confessed with the will of again sinning, and therefore such a confession could in no way diminish the devil's knowledge ||." "My advice," says Antonio

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* Mag. Spec. 159.

† Stapleton, Promptuarium Catholicum, 67.

‡ De Septem Itin. Æternit.

§ Lib. ii. 16.

|| Lib. v. c. 2.

de Guevara, "is, that the sinner, who promises to abandon this will in an hour, should not at all events wait to do so till his last hour; for the sigh which comes from a perfect will penetrates the sky, but that which is breathed by necessity does not pass through the roof of the house*." Hence many mark and follow the words of St. Isidore, saying that "he who wishes to lament the past and to engage in secular actions cannot be perfectly cleansed, since he again acts that for which he should lament†." It remains to observe briefly the meaning of the last condition, which is denominated satisfaction; for here again are signals to that Church which makes use of penance and insists on restitution. St. Thomas of Villanova, commenting on the Davidic words, "Pro nihilo salvos facies illos," adds, "So it truly is here; for to confess one's sins and to be sorry for them may surely be said to be as nothing in regard to satisfaction; and we know that satisfaction for sins is given in the death of Christ. Therefore we are saved, as it were, for nothing‡." "The penance in the confessional imposed is a symbolic punishment," says a German philosopher, who casts from without the Church a penetrating glance at her institutions. "The punishments which the Church inflicts," says the historian Pierre Mathieu, "are more medicinal than penal, to induce shame rather than pain, her arms being the Word of God§." This is so true, that excommunication itself forms no exception; for, as an enemy observes, "when there is no relenting on the sinner's part, the Church dissolves her fellowship with him, and, holding forth the dreadful sponge of excommunion, pronounces him wiped out of the list of God's inheritance, and in the custody of Satan till he repent. Which horrid sentence, though it touch neither life nor limb, nor any worldly possession, yet has it such a penetrating force, that swifter than any chymical sulphur, or that lightning which harms not the skin and rifles the entrails, it scorches the inmost soul. Yet even this terrible denouncement is left to the Church for no other cause but to be as a rough and vehement cleansing medicine, where the malady is obdurate, a mortifying to life, a kind of saving by undoing. And it may be truly said, that the severities of the Church are mercies. For if repentance sent from heaven meet this lost wanderer, and draw him out of that steep journey wherein he was hastening towards destruction, who can deny the immensity of the benefit ||?" Penances are also intended to produce salutary reflection, holy meditation, transforming images of the eternal side of things. "After a fall recover thyself," says the author of Magnum Speculum. "Wait not;

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* L'Horloge des Princes, lib. iii. 1407.

† De Sum. Bon. ii. 16.

‡ Dom. iii. Quad.

§ Hist. de Hen. IV. lib. ii.

|| Milton.

when you have time, there is time. Imitate a certain noble youth of a great city in Italy. He, as I learned from a very grave man, being immersed in a course of pleasures, used always to say to his confessor, that he could never perform the penance he enjoined. What could the spiritual father do? He at length told him to place himself on his bed, and to lie there as dead for one quarter of an hour, with his arms in the form of a cross, at his head having a lighted taper, and at his feet a crucifix. The youth complied, and by divine grace was so suddenly illuminated, that, perceiving all the turpitude of sin, he wept, and next morning hastened to his confessor, bewailed his sins, and promised complete amendment of life in future, and accepted whatever penance was then enjoined *." Indulgences mark the course of the Catholic Church from the beginning. How are these interpreted? St. Thomas supplies an answer:—

"Luendam pœnam condonat,
Tantum valet quantum sonat,
Valens indulgentia."

But, in fine, penances are imposed, thereby forming an opening to recognize the divine truth of that Church which teaches in conformity with what human reason and all primal traditions of the world imply, as may be noticed in the words of the familiar poet,—

"Quanto quisque sibi plura negaverit
A Dîs plura feret †."

The heaven-inspired prophet, as the abbot de Rancé observes, requires a change which certainly implies a great penance, crying, "Convertimini sicut in profundum recesseratis, filii Israel." Knees naked—fasting upon a barren mountain—seclusion, and other austerities may not indeed necessarily entail the change essential, and therefore never was an exaggerated stress laid upon them. In the ninth century we read that the penitents who are to fast for a year on bread and water should, on certain days, make charity with other Christians, that is, should use the same meat and drink that they use ‡. There are necessities for each person known only to God; and, where we read of extraordinary austerities, we may be sure that these are to be understood as instances. Observe that the mortifications of St. Catharine de Sienna were blamed by spiritual men at the time, and that it was only from finding that she could not abate them without injuring her health that she was permitted to continue them. Pilgrimages are enjoined, wisely, but yet with reserves,

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* Id. p. 523.

† Hor. 3 Od. xvi. 21.

‡ Regino Abb. Prum. de Eccles. Discip. lib. xix. 9.

which should confound those who now hope, by making use of Erasmus, to laugh down Catholicity. But than such dead man's grin there is nothing that can be conceived more vain; for, says St. Bonaventura, pointing out these reserves, "as God does not descend from heaven by his incommutable essence, but by influence emanating from himself, so the rational spirit is not elevated above itself by local site, but by deiform habit; and therefore, for the rational spirit to be worthy of eternal beatitude it must partake of a spiritual influence*."

"Is it well to proceed to Jerusalem or to visit other holy places? It is better," replies the master interrogated, "to give to the poor the money which the journey would have cost; but if they are moved by the love of Christ, or by the results of having been to confess their sins, and the money be of their own inheritance, or the produce of their own labour, and they commend themselves on the road to the prayers of holy communities, and give alms to the poor from their own sources, or from what is allowed them, they are to be praised for going, since both Helena and Eudoxia are praised who did this; but if through curiosity, or for the sake of human praise, they run about to holy places, they will have no other reward but the having seen beautiful spots or fine buildings, and receiving the praise which they have coveted. But, if it be money amassed by love of gain, or fraud, or rapine, or oppression, that is to defray the journey, they will be as acceptable to God and to those holy places as one who should immolate a son in sight of his father, and so approach him with bloody hands †." A certain great man in England, after in his secular life giving great cause of offence to many, became contrite and resolved to take the cross and proceed to the Holy Land; but, asking advice from some Cistercian monks, they told him, "if he wished to visit Jerusalem, he should first become a citizen of that Jerusalem, to which if he did not belong, the sight of the other Jerusalem would profit him nothing." Being thus admonished, he resolved to remain in the monastery ‡. Yet a casual meeting with the pilgrim may direct some to reflect on the truth of the religion which sanctions such penitential exercises. "A number of pilgrims, whom we had remarked below upon the lake," says Goethe, "now overtook us on those rough roads leading to St. Mary's hermitage, and asked the aid of our prayers. We saluted them, and let them pass, and, as they moved regularly with their hymns and prayers, they lent a characteristic graceful animation to the dreary heights. We saw, livingly marked out, the serpentine path which we, too, had to travel. The customs of the Romish Church," adds this writer, "are

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* Compend. Theol. Verit. lib. iv. 1.

† D. Anselmi Elucidarium, lib. ii.

‡ Mag. Spec. 95.

altogether significant and imposing to the Protestant, inasmuch as he only recognizes the inmost principle by which they are propagated from race to race; thus penetrating at once to the kernel, without troubling himself, just at the moment with the shell, the rind, or even with the tree itself, its twigs, leaves, bark, and roots." In general, all the penances enjoined in the confessional are directed to the seat of weakness or moral evil in the will, and of these some instances are recorded in our ancient books, which should not be omitted here. The form may seem ludicrous to some, and it is remarkable that it is the vainest men who accuse divine providence of frivolity; the moral, even making all possible concessions to them, is evidently no less profound. Let us hear Cæsar of Heisterbach. "A certain soldier knight, as I heard from a religious man, had committed many crimes. At length, moved to penitence, he went to a priest, made his confession, and received his penance, but did not perform it. As this happened more than once, the priest at length said to him, 'We gain nothing by all this. Tell me, then, is there any thing that you can observe for your sins?' To whom he replied, 'I have an apple-tree that bears such bitter and execrable fruit, that I can never eat them. If you please, let it be my penance never to taste them as long as I live.' The priest, knowing that after the prohibition, by the devil's instigation the flesh would find a temptation even here, replied, 'Well, then, I enjoin this upon you for your penance.' The soldier went away, making light of the obligation. The tree stood so that he could not pass in or out of his court without seeing it, and after a time he was so tempted to taste of the fruit, that, as he resisted to the utmost of his power, the force of concupiscence was so great that he actually breathed out under the tree his soul *." In the Magnum Speculum we find the following narrative:— "There was a certain holy man to whom many used to flock to confession. A certain knight, lord of a neighbouring castle, seeing that many men and women were going out of the portal, asked whither they were proceeding, and, hearing that they were going to such a saint for confession, he began to think within himself whether he ought not to go more than any one else, since he said, 'I have been a plunderer and a sinner;' but then again he deemed it useless, as he could not repent. However, at length he went to the holy man to confession. Being asked whether he could do penance for seven years, he said that he could not. Whether for three years? he replied, 'No.' Whether for one year? he again answered, 'No.' Whether during seven months? It was still 'No' that the confessor heard. Then he was asked, if in a certain desert church which was before his

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* Id. lib. iv. 77.

castle he could watch through one night as a penance? He said he could accomplish that. 'But,' said the priest, 'you will not go out, whatever may happen?' He promised that he would not. So he returned to his castle, and when he came to the desert church he alighted from his horse, tied him to the gate, entered, stood before the altar, and prayed. When night came on, the demons gathered round from all that region, and consulted together how they should prevent him from fulfilling his penance. 'Which of us,' said they, 'will expel him from the church?' 'I,' said one, who in the likeness of the knight's sister, whose advice he always followed, came in, and said, 'How can you stay here alone, when so many enemies desire to slay you, who would cut you in pieces if they could find you here? Let us return to the castle.' 'No,' said the knight; 'I have a penance to fulfil, and here I stay.' 'Then I will never advise you more,' said the sister, 'but be your enemy.' 'Be it so,' replied the knight; 'but I must remain here till morning.' Then this demon departed to his Lord, saying, 'He is harder than stone, I cannot move him. Who else will try?' 'I,' said another demon, who came in the form of the knight's wife, having in her arms her two little sons, with hair all dishevelled, rushing in and saying, 'Your enemies make an assault on the castle, they will plunder and lead captive all your people; but there is a band of men outside who only wait to see whether you are alive, and would then, if they saw you, march and defeat them.' But the knight made a similar answer. 'If you do not come,' she said, 'I will dash your two children to the ground.' The knight still prayed immoveable. So this demon likewise returned, saying, 'He is harder than adamant.' 'Let me then hasten,' said another devil; and he took on him the semblance of fire, and seemed to consume with flames all things round the church, trees and bushes, and to enter through the windows and doors of the church. 'Come all, come all, to put out the fire,' exclaimed the demon; but the knight remained motionless, and absorbed in his devotions as before. 'Who can think of praying,' shouted the fiend, 'while a fire rages? come to help us, you there within!' 'No,' said the knight, 'happen what may, I remain here this night.' So this demon withdrew discomfited. Then another came in the form of a solemn priest, and he tolled the bells of the church, and then lighted the tapers, and began to arrange the altar; then, seeing the knight, he said, 'Are you not such a knight?' 'I am,' he replied. 'Then you are excommunicated for having kindled fire in such a place, and for this crime and that. Hence, leave the church, for I cannot begin matins till you leave.' The knight replied as before, inexorable. In fine, the day dawned, and when the sun had risen the knight returned to his castle, where he found all well, as he had left it; and it

was revealed to holy men that he had won that night four celestial crowns *."

Secular history is not silent as to the penances enjoined upon men in confession, and the consistency with which they were fulfilled. In fact, spontaneous devotion in this respect has often more need to be moderated than enforced, for generally the penitent, whom faith inspires, is

> "As one, who while he works
> Computes his labour's issue, that he seems
> Still to foresee the effect."

The hermit, brother John Guerin, of Montserrat, after trusting the advice of the false hermit whom the devil represented, furnished a memorable example of penance wondrously fulfilled. In 1241, those monks of Canterbury who had succumbed to fear of the king, obeying laws which English judges now appeal to as the recognized legislation of old Catholic states, and who had accepted Boniface, of royal race, at his instance, for archbishop, repented so greatly of their sin, that some of them, impressed with a deep sense of its enormity, abandoned their Church, and took refuge with the Carthusians, to exercise mortification and penitence for the rest of their lives †. "If Philip II. of Spain," says Pierre Mathieu, "had sinned like David, he followed him also in his repentance. He condemned himself to great austerities. He lived like a monk. His exercises were only in reading the Bible, by which God speaks to men, or in prayers, by which men speak to God ‡." Truth pierces thus through all such passages, for the true and essential consequence of repentance, we must remember, is pronounced by Catholicity to be a change of manners, without which all spontaneous or enjoined penances are known to be in vain. "Do alms or penances avail if sins be not deserted?" is the question in a mediæval work; to which the master replies, "As no medicines are of any avail to cure a wound as long as the iron remains fixed in it, and until it be extracted, so no good actions profit unless sin be relinquished §." "If you ask," says Fulbert, "how you are to amend, I answer, In primis peccare desistite, quandiu enim quis Dominum offendere non cessat, nec ejus pœnitentia fructuosa est ‖." The Roman pontifical lays down the principle, and traces the effects in these words :—"Omne quod non est ex fide peccatum est, schismaticum est, et extra unitatem Ecclesiæ est. Et ideo, si usque nunc fuistis tardi ad Ecclesiam amodo

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* Id. p. 570.

† Mat. Paris.

‡ Hist. de Hen. IV. lib. i.

§ B. Anselmi Elucidarium, lib. ii.

‖ Serm. Fulberti Epist. ad Populum.

debetis esse assidui. Si usque nunc somnolenti, amodo vigiles; si usque nunc ebriosi, amodo sobrii; si usque nunc inhonesti, amodo casti *." "The first reformation of a man," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "consists in three things—in illuminated reason, in a well-inclined will, and in the subjection of sensuality †." Catholicity by such lessons might, therefore, entice to itself the old philosophy as represented by Antisthenes, who, being asked what was the most necessary thing to learn, replied, "To forget evil."

Accordingly, the experience on this road consists in the change and transformation of men. The forest has its symbolic lessons to denote the efficacy of that moral culture which is included in confession. "Never despair," Brother Giles used to say; "for there is no tree so twisted and full of knots as not to be capable of being planed and dressed by the hand ‡." Foresters tell us that by culture they can convert the thorns of trees into branches, and that thorns are only abortions of branches §. There is even a kind of German moss which is arborescent. Bamboos are arborescent grasses, and the tree-ferns of the tropics are often higher than our lime-trees and alders. The tree-fern indicates the happy region where reigns a soft perpetual spring.

Thus soft, dwarfish, stunted minds are raised by the Catholic culture to a level, in many respects, with lofty intelligences; and the harsh piercing character loses its thorns, and grows up into a gentle branch, bearing beauteous leaves and fruit.

——— "Nec longum tempus, et ingens
Exiit ad cœlum ramis felicibus arbos,
Miraturque novas frondes et non sua poma ||."

The ancients had some faint images of a happy moral change in men, and the pleasure with which they recorded them may, perhaps, justify an inference that, could they have trod this road with Christians, they would have rejoiced and profited. Valerius, so dear to the middle ages, thus treats in one chapter, de Mutatione Morum, showing us Scipio Africanus less constant in his youth, Valerius Flaccus furnishing in his first years an example of luxury, and in his latter of modesty and sanctity, escaping from vices by the study of religious rites and ceremonies. "Nothing," he says, "was more infamous than the youth of Fabius Maximus, nothing more ornate and beautiful than his old age. Similarly, Q. Catulus and Lucius Sylla

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* De Ordin. Subdiac.

† Dom. iv. post Pasch.

‡ Spec. Vitæ S. Francisci, ii.

§ Burgsdorf, Manuel Forestier, i. 46.

|| Georg. ii. 80.

were men in each of whom two men seemed to have lived at different periods. The youth of Themistocles cannot be described without shame, yet how great were his latter years*!"

Such are the Pagan examples, remarkable assuredly, though all trace of a truly divine change may be wanting in them; for, beyond what is of nature and mere human virtue, nothing, perhaps, more is visible after such metamorphosis than before. But here, on this Christian and strictly Catholic road, all is clearly supernatural. The poet, drawing from imaginative stores, is heard to say,—

> "I trod as one tranced in some rapturous vision:
> Those bloody bands so lately reconciled
> Were, ever as they went, by the contrition
> Of anger turned to love, from ill beguiled,
> And every one on them more gently smiled
> Because they had done evil; the sweet awe
> Of such mild looks made their own hearts grow mild,
> And did with soft attraction ever draw
> Their spirits to the love of freedom's equal law."

Here are great realities to furnish out his song. Let Ovid now be mute; I envy not his themes; for never transmutations did he sing more strange than those which here our convertites experience. Indeed, that poet would himself acknowledge it, as may be gathered from his lines,—

> "Quodque magis mirum, sunt qui non corpora tantum
> Verum animos etiam valeant mutare†."

"I do not ask this man," says Cicero, "quod fortasse quum in omni natura tum jam in nostra ætate difficile est, mutare animum, et, si quid est penitus insitum moribus, id subito evellere‡." What he deemed thus hopeless or impossible is witnessed daily in the Catholic Church, where sound continually the familiar words, "Gaudere oportebat quia frater tuus hic mortuus erat, et revixit; perierat et inventus est." Who has not witnessed what so greatly excited the admiration of St. Augustin? "Quæ gratia, quæ misericordia Dei? Vides hominem heri voraginem ebriositatis, hodie ornamentum sobrietatis: vides hominem heri cœnum luxuriæ, hodie decus temperantiæ. Vides hominem heri blasphematorem Dei, hodie laudatorem Dei§." Thus Eberhard, surnamed the Wild Boar of the Vosges, more ferocious than the lion and the bear, becomes converted into a lamb, and founds the Monastery of Murbach, in which he ends piously his days.

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* Lib. vi. † xv. 7. ‡ Epist.

§ S. August. in Ps. 88.

On this road we are accosted by men to whom the great changes of the world are great follies, as St. Augustin calls them; and the great changes of souls great miracles, which is the term applied to them by St. Jerome. When strangers attempt to cast suspicion on the confessional, and to deny its happy consequences, these men act like the philosopher before those who denied motion—they walk. The civil legislation in times past recognized the certainty of such effects, and on some occasions actually made provision for them. John III., king of Portugal, by a new law, in 1526, forbade robbers to be branded on the face: "For it is unjust," said the king, "that men, who can be converted, should bear marks for life of their past crimes." A convert, like another Theseus, slays the monster for whose rapacity he had been one of the chosen. True, the change is often gradual, as we find in the transformations of the forest; for lichens, then mosses, grasses, plants, and shrubs form the first covering of the naked rock, where afterwards lofty trees rear their airy summits. So the poet says,—

——————— "I went
Among the haunts and dwellings of mankind,
And first was disappointed not to see
Such mighty change as I had felt within
Expressed in outward things."

"Some secular men," says St. Isidore, "swelling with elation of mind, after being converted to God, follow Christ with religious obedience, and change their pride into humility; and there are some secretly converted, who because their conversion is not published are thought to be the same as they were always; while in the eyes of God they have risen again. Many are reprobate with men who are elect with God, and many are deemed elect by men who with God are among the reprobate *." St. Gregory says, that the conversion of the elect often becomes more complete as they advance than they had themselves proposed in the beginning; for, he adds, "semper inchoare se æstimat, et idcirco infatigabiliter in novitate perdurat †." But the reality and extent of the change, whether suddenly or by slow and gradual operation effected, remains to constitute the great signal to the divine truth of Catholicity, which the road of confession and penitence supplies. Do you ask concerning the wanderer now? As the chorus says of Ajax in the tragedy, we may reply, "He is occupied with new thoughts suitable to his new character,"—

οὐκ ἔνδον, ἀλλὰ φροῦδος ἀρτίως, νέας
βουλὰς νέοισιν ἐγκαταζεύξας τρόποις ‡.

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* De Sum. Bon. lib. ii. c. 7. † Mor. ‡ Soph. Ajax, 735.

for the Church addresses him in words like those of Cicero to Trebianus, saying, " Est tuæ sapientiæ magnitudinisque animi, quæ amiseris oblivisci, quid recuperaveris cogitare[*]." " When he enters into the house of the mind," says the Capuchin father, le Boulanger, " he will find there a new guest—Jesus has entered, and the demon departed." Great is the change then which comes over all things visible and audible, actual and conceivable too; for the order of conception is enlarged by faith. What other religion but the Catholic is conversant with such metamorphoses? Would Protestantism, if Catholicism had not existed, have ever witnessed a Ninon de Lenclos giving herself up to God in the latter years of her life; or a Scarron dying with all the gravity and devotion of a pious peasant? It is easy to talk of years effecting a mental change; but it is difficult to convince those who know what nature is to believe in their transforming power. Thus is the Church revealed; thus is the way made open; for

" Who by repentance is not satisfied
Is not of heaven, nor earth; for these are pleased."

CHAPTER VI.

THE ROAD OF THE PROUD.

AMONG the roads of life there is one eminently fatal turn; and we are arrived at it: the forest on this side grows more and more unwholesome, and the whole air is impregnated with evil emanations. The natural forest indeed itself, at certain seasons, causes cold heavy fogs, which render it dangerous; for many diseases are generated then over the corrupted mass of vegetable death: but in the labyrinth of life the obscurity and unwholesomeness of the region towards which the road here winds are continual—in spring, as well as in autumn, no genial beams ever dissipating the noxious poison that infects both young and old. It is hard to find analogies in nature with the experience preparing for us now: yet men by a name have contrived to associate even a flower with pride; old herbalists too remark, that the wormwood which grows upon the tops of mountains must needs be aspiring; and the path leads under stately beeches that smother all plants

[*] Epist. vi. 11.

which attempt to grow beneath them. This is the difficult bad way—

—— *ἣ πολλῶν ἀνδρῶν ὑπὸ γούνατ' ἔλυσε*[*].

"Therefore advise ye well
Before ye enterprise that way to wend;
One may his journey bring too soone to evill end;"

for pride finds always pride upon its road, as when the apostles murmured against James and John. At the meeting of three ways, *ἐν τριπλαῖς ἁμαξιτοῖς*, we shall find, perhaps, traces of a father's blood, shed through passion by some other Œdipus; and voices will resound lamentingly like his,—

ὦ τρεῖς κέλευθοι καὶ κεκρυμμένη νάπη,
δρυμός τε, καὶ στενωπὸς ἐν τριπλαῖς ὁδοῖς,—

"O ways which drank the blood of my father spilt by my hands[†]!" We shall hear also sounds far otherwise awful from truth itself, exclaiming, "Væ vobis quia diligitis primas cathedras et salutationes in foro;" teaching us thus that the immoderate desire of distinctions and precedence suffices to merit this fearful malediction. Oh what spirits have already passed under these melancholy boughs! Aspens, tremble now, and none will wonder; shut close your orbs, ye flowers; shrink from the touch, ye sensitive plants, and man will more admire; for here passes first he whom we met before upon a road less specially perhaps his own than this which does not bear his name—the devil, the institutor of pride, "superbiæ institutor," as St. Paulinus calls him[‡]. It was by taking this road that the devil fell, as the abbot Rupertus observes, "Ascendam in cœlum et similis ero Altissimo," being his cry.

"Quid dæmon? Erebi quid inadspectabile monstrum?
Angelus, altivoli corruptus labe tumoris;"

and then upon this path he enticed man to follow him with the words "Comedite et eritis sicut Dei," as if saying to himself, "God has not made him in his likeness, but I have made him in my likeness." Man fell not through ignorance, for God made known to him the truth; nor through weakness, for he suffered no combat of the flesh or body. He fell, therefore, through pride and contempt, unwilling to obey, unwilling to recognize that his Creator, who had given him that beautiful paradise, ought to be his preceptor and his lord[§]. The perils on this

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[*] xiv. 236.

[†] Œdip. Tyr. 1399.

[‡] Lib. ad Henricum, c. 60.

[§] De Victoria Verbi Dei, lib. ii. c. 8.

road continue to be the same in the wilderness as in the garden; for, as to Adam, so to each of his descendants the proud present themselves. "Hasten cautiously," says St. Thomas of Villanova; "there are in the way snares and precipices, of which the Psalmist said, In via hac qua ambulabam absconderunt superbi laqueum mihi *;" "and by these proud ones," says St. Francis, "are meant demons †." No road, however, is so well adapted as this is proved to be for accomplishing the object of those who seek to escape from beholding the Church standing at the centre. They may here wander on perpetually without seeing it. The road for ever descends, and no eye is adequate to form an estimate of the depth of the abyss in which it vanishes. We read, in the lives of the fathers, of a monk, who, through desire of understanding a passage of Scripture, fasted and prayed, and after seven weeks, not having received the grace which he sought, went to consult one of the other monks in the desert. While on the way, the angel of God appeared to him and said, "Your fast of seven weeks was of no avail; but now, because you have humbled yourself and thought of consulting your brother, I am sent to enlighten you." "If we wish," says St. Benedict, in his rule, "to attain to the summit of celestial exaltation, the way is by the humility of the present life. By our ascending acts that ladder is to be erected which appeared to Jacob in his dream, on which appeared descending and ascending angels; for that signifies the ascent to God by humility of heart in this present life ‡." See in the order of intelligence and of religion how prone must be the proud to grope in darkness; for "all things," says St. Gregory, "are for us uncertain, in order that we may hold one thing certain—humility." If we discard that, we pass sooner or later to universal scepticism, and describe for ever the circle of the impious. St. Isidore says, "The proud never gain perfect knowledge by study; for, though they may seem superficially wise, the secrets of truth cannot touch them; they will read and seek, but never find §."

"O fastus vitanda lues!
Culpa gravis, morbus communis, publica pestis,
Janua peccati, vitiorum mater, origo
Nequitiæ, semen odii, venatio pugnæ!
Quæ cadit ascendens, elata perit, peritura
Erigitur, promota ruit, ruitura tumescit.
Extra se cogit hominem se quærere, dum se
Exit homo, factusque sibi contrarius à se
Discrepat, oblitusque sui se nescit, et ultra
Transgrediens evadit adhuc, plus esse laborans

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* Dom. Sept. Serm.

† S. Fran. Apophthegm. li.

‡ S. Ben. Reg. c. 7.

§ De Sum. Bon. iii. c. xi.

Quam sit, nec propria contentus origine sese
Esse cupit major, et se superare laborat,
Quod petit amittens, perdens postulat, optans
Quod sibi mentitur, falsum venatur honorem.
Hæc saliunca rosas, hæc nubes nubilat astra
Virtutum, cujus tenebris patiuntur eclipsim*."

So the path grows dim and dimmer still. Now gently, now abruptly down, the rover wends, till he takes for guide heresy, pride's eldest son; and rationalism, its later-born, who kills his brother, and there beyond that point the pathway can be traced no more until we enter on eternity. Nevertheless, even on the road of the proud in general, as on every other way of human life, are found signals and openings which might direct men to Catholicity if they would only profit by the advantage and pass to the good, for which they have a diseased and most irregular desire. The first issue may be formed by a certain natural and generous abhorrence for the deformity and absurdity of pride. "The countenance from the beginning," as Pliny observes, "betrays the fatal impulse—à superbia aliubi conceptaculum, sed hic sedem habet. In corde nascitur, huc subit, hic pendet, nihil altius simul abruptiusque invenit in corpore, ubi solitaria esset†." What more hideous than intellectual and spiritual pride! "Sic ut quisque animi magnitudine maxime excellet, ita maxime vult princeps omnium vel potius solus esse‡;" or, what baser than that which old writers call "humilitas circuli," when the hypocrite revolves, descending low that he may rise in a vain shadow higher, pretending to be humble that he may be the more honoured§? Ion of Chio says, that Pherecydes was singularly modest; yet his epitaph, as composed by himself, began thus—"In me ends wisdom." It is equally a revolting spectacle, whether by affected humility or audacious sincerity men's own tongue convicts them of proud thoughts—

τῶν τοι ματαίων ἀνδράσιν φρονημάτων
ἡ γλῶσσ' ἀληθὴς γίνεται κατήγορος ||.

"There are four proofs of arrogance," says St. Odo, abbot of Cluny, "when men think that they have good from themselves; secondly, when they think that good has been given to them for their merits; thirdly, when they boast of having what they have not; and fourthly, when they desire to appear the exclusive

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* Alani Encyclopædia, c. 5.
† N. H. lib. xi. 51.
‡ Cicero de Off. i. 19.
§ Ant. de Escobar in Evang. Comment. tom. vii. 164.
|| Sept. cont. Theb. 438.

possessors of what they have *;" which distinctions, as taught also by St. Thomas, are thus rhythmically expressed :—

"Sedet monstrum singulare
In irascibile lare
Quadrifrons superbia †."

"The difference between pride and vain-glory," says St. Bonaventura, "consists in this, that the proud person appears to himself great within, but the vain-glorious seeks to appear externally by praise on the tongues of others ‡." "How many men here," as St. John Climachus says, "resemble sterile and dead trees, that lift their leafless branches straight to heaven, while those that are laden with fruit are curved to the ground §!" "From pride springs haughtiness," says St. Isidore; "for, unless the secret elation of mind preceded, the outward manifestation would not follow ‖." So here repulsive manners can give salutary warning; for many will always recoil from the thought of resembling such a person as Anicius, of whom Cicero says, recommending him to Cornificius, "Imprimis, quod ei carissimum est, dignitatem ejus tibi commendo ¶?" The marks that a man is proud even to the altitude of his virtue, incurred the reproach of the Pagans. They were not insensible to the insanity of pride. Pliny, after describing the birth and feeble infancy of man, exclaims, "Heu dementiam ab his initiis existimantium ad superbiam se genitos **." Perhaps such expressions of amaze are still more called for now than in ancient times. At least, with regard to intellectual and academic interests, one cannot but lament that we should have wandered so far from the road of those who resembled the ingenious author of a great literary age, the Duc de Rochefoucault, when he renounced the honour of a chair in the academy—"Parce qu' avec tout le courage qu'il avait montré dans plusieurs occasions des plus vives et avec toute la supériorité que la naissance et son esprit lui donnaient sur des hommes ordinaires, il ne se croyait pas capable de soutenir la vue d'un auditoire, et de prononcer seulement quatre lignes en public sans tomber en pamoison." This was only a trait of the old humanity. Cicero says, "Whenever I have to speak in public—non solum commoveor animo, sed etiam toto corpore perhorresco ††." The manners of the civilization opposed to Catholicism are delivered from such embarrassment, but the very

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* Mor. in Job. lib. xxiii.

† Doct. Ang. Sum. Theol. Synops. iii.

‡ Compend. Theol. Verit. lib. iii. 15.

§ Scal. Par. xxv.

‖ De Sum. Bon. ii. 38.

¶ Epist. xii. 21.

** N. H. vii. 1.

†† In Q. Cæcilium.

fact can supply a hint which will not be lost on some who would prefer returning to that ancient road, feeling a natural disgust for the way, however connected with modern institutions and habits on which every companion merits the ridicule of Shakspeare, where describing one of them he says, "His humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestical, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous, and thrasonical—over-proud and under-honest; in self-assumption greater than in the note of judgment—Lion sick, sick of proud heart; you may call it melancholy if you will favour the man: but by my head 'tis pride." He that would confine your circling steps upon this path is like the proud lord "that never suffers matter of the world to enter his thoughts, save such as do revolve and ruminate himself"—and shall he be worshipped? "Orgueilleuse semblance montre fol cuidance," said our fathers; and a sense of the ridiculous did not exclude the gravest considerations when they contemplated pride. In the vision of Thurcill the proud and haughty were seen tormented by mocking demons. The vain wretch now was obliged to practise before them, in order to excite their diabolic merriment, all the habitual gestures of his former pride, throwing up his head, darting side-looks, and frowning while pronouncing great words; threatening, throwing about his arms, and showing so grotesque a vanity that all the infernal spectators laughed aloud *. Whether viewed in the mirror of eternity, or in the common light of day, as existing in life, the manners of the proud can never prove attractive to any mind that is not itself deeply infected with the poison. Rather will you be drawn to those ancient Catholic voices that, tracing things indifferent to their source, exclaim, "Oh set not thy sweet heart on proud array!" for, as St. Bridget heard, "costly and superb dress, if it be the expression of a mind which is without the beauty of angels, that consists in humility, is hideous in the eyes of God †." Alanus de Insulis represents nature recognizing, in effeminate ornaments for the person and delicate attire, the presence of arrogance, one of her greatest enemies ‡. On those pleasing roads of men restored to the simplicity of nature, they who journey may use their feet and fear no scornful glances; but here, as the poet says, they must hide them in the rival chariot, and use such language as Armado loved to affect, saying, "It doth amount to one more than two which the base vulgar do call three;" for the worst snare that the proud lay for you upon this way, is that which has for object to make you feel it necessary to resemble themselves. Therefore, "above all things," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "beware of friendship

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* Mat. Paris, 1206.

† Rev. S. Birg. lib. vi. 65.

‡ De Planctu Naturæ.

with the proud, for the virus of their conversation creeps like a serpent, and it will infect your own manners. Associate with simple and humble persons, practise humility in dress and in expenditure, following what is common, avoiding singularity in all things. Beware of being distinguished amongst others. Be one of the many, not one in many, neglected among a thousand, not elected from a thousand*." Oh, how such counsels attract the youthful wanderer! He will quit at their sound the circle of the impious, and pass on in a straight line to the centre whence the sweet words emanate which are addressed to whoever would turn from it.

"Stranger! henceforth be warned, and know that pride,
Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
Is littleness."

Another signal and another avenue to Catholicity on the road of the proud are furnished by the misery which it entails upon its victims. Each might say of himself,

——— "I go alone,
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fear
Makes fear'd, and talked of more than seen."

Unsanctified solitude can never yield pleasure to a sound heart. In the forests of our temperate zone trees give men an example of the happiest life; for they live together in society, that is, many individuals of one or of a few kinds of the family of oaks, beech, pines, and birches in the northern, and limes and linden trees in the eastern forests. It is only in the tropics that an immense variety of trees live separately, unsocially; and that even in small spaces individuals of the same species are rarely associated. The proud, being self-condemned to an isolation which no heat of charity has required or hallowed, grow up to fruitless misery. "Mieulx vault aise que orgueil," is the old French proverb which directs men to Catholicity in manners and in thoughts. "There is no peace," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "no rest unless in humility; for what is it that disturbs the world but ambition and pride†?" "The ambitious man," says Pope Innocent III., "is always fearful lest he should say or do any thing to displease men: he pretends humility, honesty; he is all affability, and benignity, and subserviency; he frequents courts, visits the great, rises up to the noble, applauds, praises, flaters them; observes what the poet says,—

'Et, si nullus erit pulvis, tamen excute nullum;'

and, lo! all the while he endures within him a cruel combat, Ini-

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* De S. Martino, Serm. i.

† In Ascen. Dom. ii. Serm.

quity and Ambition, as mother and daughter, playing there in his heart[*]." Thus have we the hideous spectacle of men in their capacity of democratic leaders, like Otho adoring the vulgar "et omnia serviliter pro dominatione[†]." Remark, says St. John Climachus, "Non ait Scriptura jejunavi, non ait vigilavi, non habui requiem; sed humiliatus sum et salvavit me celeriter Dominus[‡]." "Oh!" exclaims St. Thomas of Villanova, "what a vexed and trampled upon life has he who gives way to the diabolic impulse of anger inseparable from pride!"

—— "Ire le mauvais tirant
Qui va' tousjours en empirant;
En toute mauvaistie habonde,
C'est le plus fel qui soit au monde."

"Arm yourself against him," says the Catholic guide of the thirteenth century, "when you see him advance to you." Fly to Débonnaireté, with his company; that is to say, Doulceur, Souffrance, Estableté et Attrempance, Patience, Discrétion.

"Gart donc qu' à toi ne se courrouce,
Aies en toi manière doulce,
Soies courtois et débonnaire
Comme uns homs estrait de bonne aire[§].

"Nuls ne se devroit courroucier
De rien qu'il voie, ne groucier,
Mais faire tousjours bone chière
Et mettre tout courroux arrière[‖]."

What sudden pitfalls, even on each side of the descent, are sure to betray the steps of the proud, causing them such bitter humiliation, after being allowed, perhaps, a little scene to monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks! A day pulls down human grandeur, as Minerva, in the Greek tragedy, observes,—

ὡς ἡμέρα κλίνει τε κἀνάγει πάλιν
ἅπαντα τἀνθρώπεια[¶].

And, in the sphere of intellectual ambition, what a whimsical defeat is often witnessed! "Sicut enim qui rotas ascendunt," says the monk Evagrius, "deorsum descendunt, sic qui exaltant verba sua humiliantur[**]." In the sphere of intelligence men should admire the Catholic doctrine of humility, if it were only

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[*] De Contemptu Mundi, lib. ii. c. 26.
[†] Tacitus, i. 36.
[‡] S. John Clim. Scal. Par. xxv.
[§] Of a good nest; hence the word, dé bonn aire, for débonnaire.
[‖] Le Ménagier de Paris, Le Chemin de Pouvreté et de Richesse.
[¶] Soph. Ajax, 132.
[**] Evag. Mon. Sententiæ ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg. ii.

through fear lest they should be exposed, as the Greek adage says, *ἀπό τινος ὄνου πεσεῖν* : proving themselves unable not alone to sit a horse, but even an ass, which is the expression of Plato to designate a ridiculous and humiliating fall[*]. Solon called the town in Sicily which he built Solos, after himself, and peopled it with Athenians, who, after a time corrupting their language, gave rise to the word Solecism[†]. How many names in our age illustrious for a day have already become a by-word—not to be uttered without shame! Well may all invoking mental health and true intellectual dignity invoke Catholicism to cure the fever of their pride.

Again, the wanderer may be directed to truth by witnessing the cruel and horrible effects of pride from which Catholicity alone effectually removes him, familiarizing him in every practical mode possible with the thoughts of Tobias, when he said, "Never suffer pride to reign in thy mind or in thy words; for from it all perdition took its beginning." "The offspring of pride," says Cæsarius, "are Disobedience, Inconstancy, Hypocrisy, Contention, Pertinacity, Discord, and Presumption of novelty[‡]."

Already, in our wanderings through the forest, we may have remarked how important it is in travelling, as Goethe says, to inquire after the course of the waters, and even to ask, with respect to the smallest brook, whither in reality it runs. If we use such observations with respect to the five branches of pride, which the old author distinguishes as disobedience, boasting, hypocrisy, discord, and singularity[§], we shall attain to an accurate conception of the advantages of that Catholic clue, which enables men to extricate themselves betimes from the neighbourhood of such streams, and pass on to the elevated regions which only present a distant view of their pernicious course. In the domains of thought through which they wind, the effects are seen to be most horrible and strange; there we behold bestial transformations; for those who say with Satan, "Sedebo in monte Testamenti, similis ero Altissimo," will be heard soon afterwards to cry with him, "Mitte nos in porcos." "Such," adds Antonio de Escobar, "is the descent of heretics and philosophers who exalt themselves by pride[‖]." Then follow the great social and political evils which the world itself beholds with consternation. In the lower of these stream regions the scenes of common life, where egotism and the thirst of singularity are directed to the pursuit of personal or national glory, the consequences of pride

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[*] De Legibus, lib. iii.

[†] Diog. Laert.

[‡] Rer. Illust. lib. iv. c. 3.

[§] Le Ménagier de Paris, D. i. a 3.

[‖] Ant. de Escobar, in Evang. Com. vii. 370.

are found to be no less terrible. "Oh, how pernicious," exclaims St. Isidore, "is the duel between humility and pride! Oh, quam amarus! oh, quam dirus est superbiæ congressus!" On this cursed lane, that every man and every nation not fearing God will to a certain length pursue, there is a strong attraction in a contrary direction from the centre, through the love of glory which is then identified with personal utility, as when Cicero said to Servilius Isauricus, "Sed tibi utilius est, id est, gloriosius *." But, to use a Dantean image,

—— "Soon that joy is chased
And by new dread succeeded, when in view
A lion comes against them as it appears,
With his head held aloft, and hunger mad †."

"The love of praise," say the fathers of the desert, "is a hatred from the heart of reprehension; but its end is a rejection of the divine assistance, confidence in one's own strength and demoniac manners ‡." Dante's infernal lion therefore represents it well. Here we are again met by all the diabolic forms that passed upon the road of sin; "for in the conflict of the eight principal vices," says St. Aldhelm, "though placed the last in order, Pride, as an atrocious queen, exercises a tyrannic power and a despotic monarchy over all others §." Then follow in the human what we behold sometimes in the vegetable forest—the clearance of vast spaces by the axe. War, caused by pride, cuts down without regard to any interests but its own. In April, 1813, the senate in Paris adds 18,000 men to those already ordered. "Coupes extraordinaires d' hommes!" exclaims Chateaubriand, using forest language, "au milieu des coupes reglées." "The illustration of our emperor," he says, "only cost us two or three hundred thousand men annually. We paid for it three millions of our soldiers." And yet the world sees proof that "qui aufert spiritum principum," that is, says Rupertus, of the proud ||, ordains such men to be disappointed of their aim. Unless we take the sentiment of savages and barbarous wild hordes, as described by missionaries to the wildest regions of the earth, for umpire, the Catholic Church is found to have proclaimed a fact in saying that true glory cannot be obtained by the proud. "Vera gloria," as Cicero, who ought to be a great authority on such a subject, says, "radices agit atque etiam propagatur; ficta omnia celeriter, tamquam flosculi, decidunt, nec

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* Ep. xiii. 63.

† i. 1.

‡ S. Joan. Clim. Scal. Par. xxii

§ Lib. de Laudibus Virginit.

|| De Div. Officiis, xii. 17.

simulatum potest quidquam esse diuturnum*." "Glory," says St. Anthony of Padua (and he seems here to vanquish the Roman orator on his own ground), "is like a shadow; if you pursue it, you will not lay hold of it; and if you run from it, then it will follow you†." Lopes de Vega, on his death-bed, said to Montalvan, "True glory is in virtue; and I would give all the applause I ever received as a poet, for having done one good action more."

In fine, we come to the avenue presented to the Catholic Church, upon the road of the proud, by means of the natural beauty of humility, which, sooner or later, cannot but extort from men a recognition of its excellence, and thereby facilitate their advance to truth. Hear how the author of the Ménagier de Paris addresses the women of the thirteenth century:—

"Quant tu verras venir Orgueil
Regardant en travers de l'ueil
Avecque lui Desrision,
Desdaing, Despit, Présumption,
Supediter, Fierté, Bobance,
Desprisier, et Oultrecuidance,
Vers toi, banière desployé,
Si pres tantost de ton aye
Humilité, Devotion,
Franchise, Contemplatien,
Paour de Dieu, Doulceur, et Pitié,
Justice, Simplesse, Equité‡."

"Arma et gladii in via superbi;" on which words, St. Bonaventura comments, adding, "arma sunt exempla humilitatis Christi et sanctorum; quæ valde pavenda sunt cordibus superborum§." The proud are invited to behold the divine simplicity of our Lord, as when the ruler invites him to come to cure his daughter, and, without replying, he complies—"et surgens Jesus sequebatur eum;" they reflect how difficult, if they take all the circumstances into account, it would be to persuade a proud man to act exactly in the same manner. They recognize the new element, and they yield up their hearts to adore its author. They observe the humility of the saints.—Who can pass without seeing it? They mark and they admire, for instance, a Don Benedict Sala, abbot of Mountserrat, wishing his name to be omitted in the catalogue of abbots, saying, "I do not deserve to be in this list. Pray to God that my name may be written in the book of life." They mark and they admire a Jane de Chantal, refusing to use the rich cushions provided for her in

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* De Off. ii. 12.

† Fer. ii. in Passione.

‡ Id. Le Chemin de Pouvreté et de Richesse, D. ii. a. 1.

§ De Uno Doct. Serm. i.

the chapel of the Prince de Cantecroix, saying to the princess, "Do not command me to kneel here, I should not feel at ease; a nun has a prie-dieu every where prepared, namely, the earth which served our Lord for that purpose in the garden of Olives, and when he passed the night upon the mountains*." These words and actions, however insignificant some may think them, are arms and swords in the way of the proud. They end by surrendering up their hearts. It is not the philosophic treatise against pride, it is not even the devout homily, it is the kneeling down on the dank cold ground, to imitate Jesus Christ, that conquers them. For a while they may use a little of their old poison to cure themselves, repeating the words of Antonio de Guevara to the commander Aguilere, "Certes, to a man in power, there is not in the world so high a kind of vengeance as to forgive †;" or those of the poet, still more subtle,—

"Strives Bolingbroke to be as great as we?
Greater he shall not be: if he serve God
We'll serve him too, and be his fellow so."

On one side, they will consider the end of the proud, and their disgraceful fame, as when Dante heard,

—— "He in the world was one
For arrogance noted: to his memory
No virtue lends its lustre ‡."

On the other, they will observe St. Francis desiring to be buried under the gibbet, without the walls of Assissi, where criminals used to be executed, on a hill called the hill of Hell, and the grave of that humble saint causing the spot to be known ever afterwards under the title of the hill of Paradise §. Thus pride, perhaps, will find a counteracting element in a mixed infusion distilled from the same root; but, in the end, the real special antidote prevails, and the pure unearthly counsels of Catholicism, fragrant with the breath of angels, captivate the proud. Experience, indeed, comes to their aid at length, convincing them that therein lies their safety. The abbot Anthony said, "I saw all the snares of the enemy set over the whole earth, and I said, groaning, 'Who can pass these in safety?' and I heard a voice replying, 'Humilitas ‖.'" They, too, hear the same voice, assuring them that "God is not delighted with labour, but with simplicity and humility ¶; that humility can heal wounds otherwise incurable; that, if pride made some of the angels demons,

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* De Changy, Mém. de S. Jeanne, 17.

† Epist. lib. ii.

‡ Inf. 8.

§ Franc. à Rivotorto Sacri Conventus Assisiensis Historia, 1.

‖ De Vita SS. Patrum, 15.

¶ Scal. Par. xxvi.

humility would convert demons into angels *." So, from among the foremost on the dangerous way, some will return to the straight road ending at the Catholic Church with the deepest conviction of its superiority above every other; and these, too, hear, at the bottom of their hearts, a voice like that which addressed its divine counsels to St. Bridget, saying, "You ought to humble yourself in a fourfold manner. First, before the powerful of the world, because man cannot stand without rulers, and therefore he should submit to authority; secondly, before the spiritual poor, that is, before sinners, praying for them; thirdly, before the spiritual rich, that is, before the friends of God, thinking how unworthy you are to serve them and converse with them; fourthly, before the dear poor of this world, assisting and clothing them, and washing their feet †." Accordingly, it is in the class of men born to princely honours that the conferences of St. Vincent de Paul find often now their most active and devoted members. Certainly, one of the most simple, unaffected, and humble of men, in his daily actions, that the stranger ever knew, was one who, by a kind of hereditary right, had once been thought the proudest scion of a haughty race, who, if he had been told that a day would come when his high name was to be enrolled with the young workman, as one appointed to accompany him on his errand to the indigent family, would have answered, like Achilles, "Never!"

ἐμεῦ ζῶντος καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ δερκομένοιο ‡.

But now, as the monasteries of the middle ages so often witnessed, he has taken a path new for him, and resolved on leaving the road of pride to consort henceforth with humility.

"Quanto magis hæc descendit
Tanto magis hæc ascendit
Duodecim gradibus."

"And these steps," adds the commentator on this maxim of St. Thomas, "consist in the humble expression of the eyes, in the moderation of the voice, in suppressing intemperate laughter, in keeping silence till asked, in holding the common rule, in believing one's self worst of all, in believing one's self to be unqualified, in confessing one's vices, in enduring harsh things through obedience, in being subjected to elders, in not following self-will, and in fearing God and remembering his precepts §."

On each of these twelve steps the divine truth of the Catholic religion is found indeed to be experimentally established—but, no doubt, the difficulty upon this road is, to discover them; for,

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* Id. xxx.

† Rev. S. Birg. lib. iv. 91.

‡ 1.

§ Doct. Angel. Sum. Theol. Synops. iii.

thanks to the guide whom men have chosen for themselves on entering upon it, these steps will generally be passed by unobserved, as the roots of trees over which the soil has long accumulated. How are they now overgrown with weeds and concealed by tangled thorns! St. Bridget heard a divine voice assuring her that nothing could ever induce this guide to point them out. "The intention of the devil," it said to her, "is such, that before he would humble himself, he would rather that there were as many hells as there are atoms in the sun-beams, and that he should endure them all for ever*." From the willing disciples of such a master little can be expected; and the numbers on the boards of his college, it is to be feared, are not a few, though many would pretend to have a different alma mater from their own.

—— "Why, who cries out on pride, that
Can therein tax any private party?
Doth it not flow as hugely as the sea,
Till that the very means do ebb?"

"Therefore, if we wish to be cured of the infirmity of pride, so perilous, and so rooted in our hearts, I know no other means," says Marina de Escobar, "but to have recourse to God by prayer, where man learns to know himself, and by that knowledge to desire rather to be forgotten, than to be extolled by others†." St. Isidore, in describing the combat of Christians, represents as the only opponent to vain-glory, the fear of God‡. But few that are far advanced in evil will heed such admonitions; so we must therefore watch them still farther, and expect to find them choosing tracks that become each more cursed than the last, leading through deeper and deeper gloom. They who would see men at the worst, need not fear that these will stop short of it at pride in the general.

"In all its indexes, although small pricks
To their subsequent volumes, there is seen
The baby figure of the giant mass
Of things to come at large."

The spirits of evil that seek to conceal the centre, may now hope for full success. "How dare you remain," said a certain prior to the demon, "when that man there is present?" "I fear him not," he replied; "for he is proud§."

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* Rev. S. Birg. lib. iv. c. 95.

† Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, p. i. lib. v. c. 31.

‡ 11.

§ Mag. Spec. 634.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ROAD OF THE FOUR WINDS.

THERE is a certain popular instinct that avoids the use of some words and names as supremely sinister and fatal. The road that receives the proud here wandering can attest it; for in whatever crowds they may pass along it, you will never find that it is expressly called after them, according to their later titles. Woods are represented in old symbolic painting as sheltering confederates, whose object was to attack faith.

> "Quem mihi tu nidum? Res haud indigna rogatu.
> Tartara, lucifugas, nigro cum pectore, silvas."

Yet our foresters, who give names to all the roads and paths of the woods, many of them recalling things terrible enough, one might think, to render them callous to the worst, abstain from allusion to such visitors with a consent so undeviating and general, that it recalls the answer of the Abbot Agathon, who submitted to all reproaches patiently, and only resisted the imputation of being a heretic, saying, "I endured all other accusations, cheerfully following the example of our Lord, who, when false witnesses were adduced against him, replied not a word; but I could not sustain to be called a heretic, for heresy is a separation from God*."

The stranger will gladly follow the forest usages in this respect, and avoid naming directly those whose peculiar wanderings through it now he is about to witness. As our foresters say on such occasions, "he is hoarse;" "Il a vu le loup, il est enroué." Let them be "the well-named," as the Greeks, fearing to say the left hand, used the word. The *εὐώνυμος* will express him of whose works he devoutly wishes he had never heard.

> *αἶ γὰρ δή μοι ἀπ' οὔατος ὧδε γένοιτο!*

Might I never have heard of such things! If not by that universality of observation belonging to our office, now constrained, my cry would be with Pliny: "Procul a nobis nostrisque literis absint ista." There is a name I will not speak. It hath been a curse. The way proclaims its danger from the first.

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* Mag. Spec. 328.

"A barren detested vale, you see, it is ;
The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean,
O'ercome with moss, and baleful misletoe.
Here never shines the sun ; here nothing breeds
Unless the nightly owl, or fatal raven."

Another poet seems to have it in view in the lines describing a certain northern shore :—

"Triste solum ; sterilis, sine fruge, sine arbore, tellus,
Frigus iners illic habitant, Pallorque Tremorque."

Here, in fact, we at once miss all vegetation ; the road leading to a naked, wind-blown, stony land, covered with vast erratic boulders, as well as with small round stones, carried down by devastating torrents—no shade, no Flora, no refreshment to the eye, no fortuitous sod even to yield a seat—nothing but a wide spectacle of barrenness and desolation, where one might expect to meet Hunger herself, as the poet saw her,—

——— "Lapidoso vidit in agro
Unguibus et raras vellentem dentibus herbas."

If there be shelter through this part of the wilderness, it seems only provided for the eggs of venomous serpents, to which St. Paulinus compares the seeds of heresies* ; and it certainly would not cost the imagination much to see dragons' nests in the clefts of the rocks,—

——— "Locus est inamabilis, et quo
Esse nihil toto tristius orbe potest†."

Further on, when trees again appear, one may be reminded of what Pliny says, describing how, excepting on the northern coast, woods fill the whole remainder of Germany, and even add shades to the cold : "Adduntque frigori umbras‡." That naturalist observes generally, that the shade of the pine kills the grass, while that of the walnut is heavy and noxious, even to the human head, and nearly to all things§. Through these dreary valleys, by discoloured streams, stand some solitary fir-trees, and the old, weather-beaten stumps of pines that have been snapt across by the fitful blasts ; for often here are felt such storms as might recall what Dante felt below,—

"Large hail, discolour'd water, sleety flaw
Through the dun midnight air stream'd down amain‖."

This is the wandering wood that Spenser speaks of, through

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* S. Paulin. Aquil. Cont. Felicem, lib. i. c. 4.
† iv. 7.
‡ N. H. xvi. 1.
§ xvii. 18.
‖ Inf. 8.

which are only found some chance paths tracked out by wild animals, leading to "Errour's den." Journeying on over this lonely steep, along a traitorous path that leads you wrong, Dantæan language might describe what soon ensues; for,

——— "Scarce the ascent
Began, when, lo! a panther, nimble, light,
And covered with a speckled skin, appear'd;
Nor, when it saw me, vanish'd; rather strove
To check my onward going; that ofttimes
With purpose to retrace my steps, I turn'd."

When his guide said to him,

——— "Thou must needs
Another way pursue, if thou wouldst 'scape
From out that savage wilderness. This beast
At whom thou criest, his way will suffer none
To pass, and no less hindrance makes than death.
So bad, and so accursed is her kind,
That never sated is her ravenous will,
Still after food more craving than before*."

The poet of old esteems worthy of being transmitted to posterity the names of all the youths who came with Meleagrus to hunt the Calydonian boar that ravaged Œtolia†. This panther of heresy, as the Abbot Joachim calls it‡, is a fell enemy of the world's happy peace, against which no one should refuse to furnish whatever help he can supply, whether formally commissioned to the chase or not, as when the wolf escapes from the woods to prowl over the land, and each peasant stripling joins in the pursuit. But there is this great difference to be remarked between our proposed hunting and all other—that it is charity which renders it desirable, if not obligatory; for, as St. Augustin says, "Tanto magis debemus commemorare vanitatem Hæreticorum, quanto magis quærimus salutem eorum§." It is true, we shall have to meet with men who are designated by truth itself as wolves—lupi rapaces; for, as Stapleton remarks, "if it be the sheep's clothing to say we are evangelical, and we preach the Word, it is all the rapacity of the wolf, of which we find traces wherever they have entered ||." But, according to the old advice,—

"Non homines sed monstra cavens, et crimina vitans¶,"—

our shafts shall be directed against the monster itself as an

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* Inf. † viii. 7. ‡ Sup. Hier. § Enar. in Ps. 36.
|| Staplet. Prompt. Cath. sup. Evang. vii. Dom. post Pent.
¶ Alani Encyclop. vii. 6.

intellectual evil, rather than at its progeny in the form of flesh, from whom we had best simply turn away our eyes, while we should not only pity, but love its victims. At such adversaries, whatever be their character, they who follow the old Catholic banner do not think it sweet to laugh in accordance with the old suggestion,—

οὔκουν γέλως ἥδιστος εἰς ἐχθροὺς γελᾶν[*].

"To expose or censure evils, desperate, and arrived at their height, is never agreeable," says a sage, whom the truly wise may often follow, though it may be sometimes necessary: λοιδορεῖν γὰρ πράγματα ἀνίατα—οὐδαμῶς ἡδὺ, ἀναγκαῖον δ' ἐνίοτε ἐστίν[†]. Certainly, no one should be invited to imitate those guides who seem to think, when meeting with "the well-named," as if they could rail them into faith and holiness; though, as St. Gertrude says, "if, loving truth, one should commit faults in defending it, either by severity in reproof, or in any other manner, such zeal will find excuse and indulgence before God and all the heavenly citizens[‡]."

———— "Sed si modo nomina rebus
Addere vera placet, non hoc injuria factum
Verum amor est."

And if one, delivered from the necessity of wandering, should exceed a little in his zeal, the Dantæan words may be recalled,—

———— "No wonder, since he knows
What sorrow waits on his own worst defect,
If he chide others, that they less may mourn[§]."

"Surely," as a recent poet says, "it is hard for those whose privilege it is to know of blessings that were once enjoyed throughout the Christian world, to brook with patient spirit their ways who coldly thrust aside these ancient things."—Hard to speak always with due temper of those sophists, against whom, says Robert d'Arbriselle, "Nemo nisi Christianæ religionis delicatus miles ac sine affectione vix semichristianus, stylum acuere dissimularet. What legitimate son of the Church," he continues, "can bear with indifference to see our holy mother insulted and lacerated by such a crew? Let the superstitiously meek, the impiously pious, and piously impious, learn from the example of our Lord, and from St. John, not to keep silence, or conceal their indignation. St. Jerome, too, might teach them, who always wished that the enemies of the Church should be his

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[*] Soph. Ajax, 79.

[†] Plato de Legibus, 11.

[‡] Vit. et Rev. S. Gert. Abb. lib. iv. c. 48.

[§] Purg. 15.

enemies; and St. Gregory also, who said, 'Vobis et nobis parcimus si hoc quod displicet non tacemus*.'" Such sentiments will be called by many now illiberal; but the judgment of the Roman philosopher could dispense men from answering them. "To justice," he says, "all things are to be referred—nam et qui gratificantur cuipiam, quod obsit illi, cui prodesse videantur, non benefici, neque liberales, sed perniciosi assentatores judicandi sunt†." And yet, some things belonging to heresy I would forget, some absolutely ignore, and, if possible, remain in ignorance of; for, as the same Roman author says, "jam in tanta istius impudentia remittendum aliquid videtur, ne omnia contendamus, ne omnia cum dolore agere videamur‡." And, after all, perhaps apologies are uncalled-for; since, if "the well-named" should ever read what will be proposed here, they will take it, probably, for a eulogium on themselves. Some men are shame-proof, and 'tis policy in them to be so.

A simple tale suggests itself at this pass to serve for prelude to the rest. It was on a summer's evening that the stranger, with a joyous laughing troop of children, passing near a little rustic chapel on a northern shore of France, heard from the youngest, who was the general darling, that she must enter to say a Pater and an Ave before proceeding to what she called the friendly hill. The troop ran smiling in after her, and the grey walls of that little chapel seemed to him, who stood with some ponies outside, to rejoice as they enclosed those innocents; but lo! in a few moments, they all came slowly out with quite altered countenances, silent and sorrowful, with finger on the lip, as if some unaccountable spell had just fallen on them all. What could it be that had so suddenly transformed their merry hearts? On being questioned, they told, in a half mysterious tone, that some fine and perfumed English strangers were inside, acting as no other human beings, said they, would act—one of the party wearing his hat; one "lady" eating; another peeping into the holy-water font; another, a woman, too, though sour looking, affecting a supercilious smile, and showing to her companions the ex voto of a grateful mother, representing a sick boy whose recovery was ascribed to holy prayers. No pity, grace, or manners; all making mowes upon things sacred; winking at each other; holding the sweet jest up! neither having the accent of Christians, nor the look of Christians! It was clear, without hastening to see with one's own eyes, what the children had beheld. It could be nothing but a company of the "well-named" freshly arrived from the opposite coast, whose presence

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* Rob. d'Arb. Op. quad. super Compescenda Hæreticorum Petulantia, Præf.

† De Off. i. 14.

‡ In Ver. ii. lib. ii.

had startled them, as it well might; for in this description of persons, however fine, there is no modesty, no maiden shame, no touch of bashfulness; nor can the looks of kneeling children undo for a moment the hateful imperfection of their eyes. For once, at least, this sport, well carried, shall be chronicled. Thus, for a moment, was the joy of youthful disciples of our Lord put to flight, and a sinister presentiment of the worst realities of the world substituted in young hearts for a peace not far removed from ecstasy. Thus in the forest of life do melancholy transitions, however we may wish to avoid them, await us all. One cannot wonder at the ancients for endeavouring to escape from the influence of certain spectacles and names that were held ominous and fatal. Pompey the Great, flying from Cæsar after Pharsalia, steered towards Cyprus, and on approaching Paphus, saw a handsome edifice on the shore, and asked the pilot what it was called. He answered, "*κακοβασιλέα*." The word seemed to overwhelm him, and dispel his last faint remaining hopes. He turned away his eyes, and expressed his grief with sighs[*]. There are objects still—basilicas, if you prefer the word to temples—standing on many shores, from which we, too, might turn our eyes in discouragement and lamentation. The way now before us, at all events, abounds with them. Moreover, if the roads through other regions of the forest proved tortuous and intricate, here we shall find the difficulties far greater than any with which we have as yet been confronted; for this wood indeed resembles the labyrinth of Crete, as described by the ancients: "Quæ itinerum ambages occursusque ac recursus inexplicabiles continet—ad fallendos occursus, redeundumque in errores eosdem[†]." Nevertheless, there are signals of different kinds standing as elsewhere to guide and warn men, though some may have been designedly twisted by rude malicious hands from the right direction; but, as a poet asks,—

"Pour rendre leur route douteuse
Suffit-il qu' une main honteuse
Change l'écriteau du chemin?"

There are immoveable signals still, which cannot be uprooted or turned round. There are natural issues left, and these we must now briefly note in passing. The first class of signals may be distinguished as negative, consisting of warnings as to what paths should be avoided; among which tracks, however now well beaten, we find clearly enough denounced the way of eclectics, who, as an old historian says, choose certain opinions contrary to the doctrine of the Church and to the holy Scrip-

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[*] Val. Max. i.

[†] Plin. N. H. lib. xxxvi. 19.

tures, publicly teaching and obstinately defending them, which constitutes, he adds, heresy. "Sometimes," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "the spirit is more dangerous than the flesh, unless it be guided by reason and discretion *." Of that fatal lapse which has divided Christendom, the main cause, however associated with plausible pretexts, was the curst pride of men who sought to satisfy their foolish hearts' desire; and it is the signals and issues presented on the road which they followed that we have now to mark.

The wanderers we are watching soon come to signs and letters indicating that this path, to speak only of its least evils, is wearisome and unsatisfactory; for, in the first place, it leads to perplexity in matter of religion, which can never be grateful to the human mind,

> "For he among the fools is down full low,
> Whose affirmation or denial is
> Without distinction †."

Diana, called Trivia, was worshipped by the ancients at the meeting of cross roads; but Protestantism, left to itself when intersecting paths perplex the wanderer, holds out no hope of assistance. Very significant is it to witness genius of the highest order once lost upon this path, involved in self-contradiction and inconsistency; to hear such a mighty master as Goethe acknowledging that in his letters he contradicts himself. "It may be so," he says in answer to the reproach, "but I was not aware of it. I must however confess, that nothing seems to me more likely, for I have lately been tossed about by mighty spirits, and therefore it is quite natural if at times I know not where I am standing ‡." "Apud Ecclesiam," says Robert d'Arbriselle, "est sacra veritas, extra illam quid nisi vanitas prophana et execranda falsitas?" Self-contradiction is not one of the least consequences of such error:

> ——— "O madness of discourse,
> That cause sets up with and against itself!
> Bifold authority! where reason can revolt
> Without perdition, and loss assume all reason
> Without revolt; this is and is not!"

Here the scene described by Dante is repeated—

> ——— "One choir cries Nay,
> Another, Yes, they sing §;"

but it is easy to discover, with our great poet, that "to say ay

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* Comment. in Cantic. Cant.

† Par. 13.

‡ Rome, Feb. 21, 1787.

§ Purg. ii. 10.

and no too was no good divinity ;" therefore some men will turn instinctively to that teaching which corresponds with the rule of faith propounded by St. Paul, where he says,* " Our preaching to you was not, It is, and It is not. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us was not, It is, and It is not, but It is, was in him *." The confusion of Augsburg, as a French ambassador called that transaction at the time, left, in fact, from one end of Germany to the other confusion in ideas, in manners, in institutions, and in all social tendencies ; and the same disturbance continues to this hour, when in England, as in the shades of old,

——— " Chaos umpire sits
And by decision more embroils the fray."

Some men read this signal, and turn to that teaching of the Catholic Church which can restore intellectual order, " and disinherit chaos that reigns there." We may remark, too, how much Protestantism has generally shown itself dissatisfied even with the very guides of its own choice and ordination. Thus one declares it to be unnecessary to the attainment of Christian knowledge, " that men should sit all their life long at the feet of a pulpited divine ; while he, a lollard indeed over his elbow cushion, in almost the seventh part of forty or fifty years teaches them scarce half the principles of religion ; and his sheep ofttimes sit the while to as little purpose of benefiting, as the sheep in their pews at Smithfield ; and for the most part by some simony or other bought and sold like them : what skills it that they be hot volumists and cold bishops ; a swashbuckler against the pope, and a dormouse against the devil, while the whole diocese be sown with tares, and none to resist the enemy, but such as let him in at the postern ; a rare superintendent at Rome, and a cipher at home. Hypocrites ! the gospel faithfully preached to the poor, the desolate parishes visited and duly fed, loiterers thrown out, wolves driven from the fold, had been a better confutation of the pope and mass, than whole hecatontomes of controversies ; and all this careering with spear in rest, and thundering upon the steel cap of Baronius or Bellarmine." This careering may have added to the suffering of Catholic martyrs, as when John Paine, the day before his martyrdom, said that the ministers, by their foolish babbling, " did much vex and trouble him," but it did not satisfy thoughtful men of the new banner, who seem to have detected often what lurks beneath the Calvinistic gown, and to have said to themselves at least, on seeing it, " If thou didst put this sour-cold habit on to castigate thy pride, 'twere well." Dr. Johnson says, that he kept away from Church oftener than he ought, but that the provocations given by igno-

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* 2 Corinth. i.

rant and affected preachers too often disturb the mental calm which otherwise would succeed to prayer. Others detected scepticism of the worst kind, and general infidelity in men who professed to guide and to baptize them, and therefore said with the poet,

> "Could but the vulgar catch a glimpse the while
> Of that dark bird which nestles in his hood,
> They scarce would wait to hear the blessing said."

If our wanderers again here would only pen down their dilemmas, they would find that we might address to them the very words which Cicero used when arguing with certain disputants in his time:—"Your conclusions destroy your premises," he said, "and your premises your conclusions *." "Strange religion," exclaims Balmes, speaking of Protestantism, "which neither comprehends nor accepts fully either its principles or its effects †." The vicious circles, too, of such instructors, supply a spectacle like that of Ixion chained upon the wheel. By degrees, moreover, they contract that inveterate habit of compromise and insensibility to logical conclusions which is so characteristic of nations that have an establishment of heresy to defend, which habit extends even to secular matters, forming a constant puzzle to all foreign observers who might address them in the old poet's words,—

> "You have been a boggler ever:
> But when we in our viciousness grow hard,
> (O misery on't) the wise gods seal our eyes;
> In our own filth drop our clear judgments; make us
> Adore our errors; and laugh at us, while we strut
> To our confusion."

Now no one naturally can wish to be deceived when a shadow is presented for a substance. Yet such is the position of the chooser whose religious opinions are modelled into form by a human power. "Rem sine corpore amat; corpus putat esse quod umbra est." From their own logicians, indeed, these men have had stern lessons. "For shame then," says one, "do not urge that authority to keep up a bishop that will necessarily engage you to set up a pope. Retain what you retain, and then must we be constrained to take upon ourselves a thousand superstitions and falsities, which the papists will prove us down in, from as good authorities, and as ancient as these that set a bishop above a presbyter. And the plain truth is, that when any of our men, of those that are wedded to antiquity, come to dispute with a papist, and leaving the Scriptures put themselves without

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* De Finibus, iv.

† l. c. 3.

appeal to the sentence of synods and councils, using in the cause of Sion the hired soldiery of revolted Israel; where they give the Romanists one buff, they receive two counterbuffs *." Clearly on such grave points as here are called in question, it will not be the poet or the rhetorician who can fully satisfy the intelligence; for, as one of their own number says,

χαλεπὸν μέν, καὶ δεινῆς γνώμης, καὶ μείζονος ἢ 'πί τρυγῳδοῖς ἰάσασθαι νόσον ἀρχαίαν ἐν τῇ πόλει ἐντετοκυῖαν †.

No one denies that the pomp of orators has often been displayed in developing and explaining the opinions opposed to the Catholic faith. What subtlety, what power of language is daily employed against it! but neither is this found permanently sufficient, for as the Roman author says, on consideration these things satisfy less—"Quæ quum magnifice primo dici viderentur considerata minus probantur; sensus enim cujusque et natura rerum atque ipsa veritas clamat ‡;" or, as he observes elsewhere, eloquence does not comprise all—"Non enim quemadmodum putatis, omnia sunt in eloquentia. Est quædam tamen ita perspicua veritas, ut eam infirmare nulla res possit §." The Church shines on thee. Can thy words affect her? Wilt thou reach stars because they shine on thee? And after all, what are these best discourses against faith? They play on this theme like a child on a recorder; a sound, but not in government. Their speech is like a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered—words, words, mere words, no matter from the heart. Neither can the voice of Catholicity be drowned by that declamatory warfare which characterizes its opponent, of whom we may often say, "What he can by discourse and reason I know not;—in clamando quidem video eum esse bene robustum atque exercitatum ||." He who is catholically, that is, in one sense, naturally, moved within the sphere of reason, will soon detect this manner of wrenching the true cause the false way, and will then quietly reply, "It is not enough to speak, but to speak true. It is not a confident brow, nor the throng of words that can thrust me from a level consideration." Every one, it is true, is not a pilot to resist this impetuous tide of words, though it may be clear that the protestor "draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument." "Why, he will speak errors, Sir, with such volubility, that you would think truth were a fool;" but a sense of wanting somewhat more substantial than his words, will direct the intelligence towards Ca-

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* Milton.

† Vesp. 650.

‡ De Finibus, iv.

§ Pro P. Quintio.

|| In Q. Cæcilium.

tholicism, feeling, as Jocasta says in the tragedy, that this is an additional evil, to be without wisdom among those who err—

καὶ τοῦτο λυπρόν, ξυνασοφεῖν τοῖς μὴ σοφοῖς *.

" In constructing the house of the Lord," says St. Bruno, " no hammer or axe, or other tool was heard, because the Church, which it signified, was to be raised not by iron, but by the tongue. A fearful tool was Arius, an evil hammer Sabellius, a dreadful axe Nestorius, who were good to destroy, not to edify. The noise of no such implements is heard in the Church; only the voice of the turtle is heard in our land †." It was a keen observer of his countrymen, though perhaps a malicious poet, who said, " the truth is, that in these days the grand primum mobile of England is cant; cant political, cant religious, cant moral; but always cant, multiplied through all the varieties of life. I say cant, because it is a thing of words, without the smallest influence upon human actions." Now, of the kind of discourse implied by this expression, judicious men will grow weary; and in general all wordy attempts at persuasion, in which Protestantism may be said to consist, produce sooner or later the same significative effect. Socrates does not hesitate to call even rhetoric a hideous thing; for he adds, " I call hideous whatever is evil, and what is a part of flattery must be evil ‡." The moderns, who distinguish their different religions as so many different " persuasions," will not much approve of the latitude which he ascribes to the word, adding, " cookery is also an instrument of persuasion—all these things produce persuasion; rhetoric and cookery are essentially concerned with persuasion §." " A persuasion" supposes rhetoric or cant, supposes a certain intellectual cookery, supposes flattery, supposes something hideous. You are of a certain persuasion? Then you have been flattered, imposed upon by some empty form of words. Men are thus directed from opinions, however soothing to self-love, supported by declamatory eloquence to faith, combatting their passions, unpalatable perhaps, but resting on and producing realities. The protestor, like Polus in the Gorgias, may indeed complain and say, that in truth one must have very little politeness to bring the controversy to such a conclusion as this, adding, " Have I not then liberty to speak as long as I like?" But wherever the confusion of the four winds reigns, the natural answer to him will be precisely that of Socrates, " You would be very much to be pitied, my dear friend, if after coming to Athens, the spot of all Greece where one has the greatest liberty of speech, you should be the only one deprived of this right. But put yourself in my place. If you speak as

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* Phœniss. 394.

† S. Brun. de laudib. Eccles.

‡ Gorgias.

§ Id.

you please, and refuse to answer with precision to what I ask you, should not I be also in my turn deserving of pity, if it were not permitted me to go away and not listen to you?"

Here the transition is smooth to an observation of the next general signal, consisting in the inability of the new guides to give short, precise, and satisfactory replies when questioned by men searching for the truth. "I saw Carneades," said one of his contemporaries, "so subtle in his studies, that when he speaks, one hardly can distinguish between truth and falsehood, such address had he to express them." It would be folly to deny the genius and the facility of expression which so often characterize the eccentric teachers who oppose the advance of men to Catholicity. To these guides we may address the compliment of Pentheus to Bacchus. "You are wise excepting in that in which you ought to be wise—

σοφὸς σοφός γ' εἶ, πλὴν ἃ δεῖ σ' εἶναι σοφόν*."

Who are more wise in their generation than such men, if all considerations beyond those of certain material interests are excluded? The abbot Rupert, observing that Cham is interpreted cunning, adds, "that in this respect he represents all who attack faith—scilicet omnis hæreticus callens ad rixam, contentiosus et impatiens †." Without their general answer you shall never take them, unless you take them without their tongue. But when you closely question them their facility is at an end, and you feel prompted to repeat Shakspeare's taunt, "No marvel, though you bite so sharp at reasons, you are so empty of them." Hear them propose their charges against the Catholic doctrine, and what can one who knows it answer without incurring the fault condemned by the wise man, unless he be content, with Touchstone's "Shallow, shallow; a better instance, I say; come?" Hear their "besides," and must it not be still, "shallow again; a more sound instance, come?" Hear their conclusion, and what remains for you but still to cry, most shallow man? Wilt thou so rest? God help thee, shallow man! Of discourse in general against Catholicism one may observe, in the language of the old French, "C'est bien sauté du cocq à l'asne," for you never saw a cock so jump to an ass's back as such objectors jump in their discourse. At every turn they think they have discovered a weak point in the Catholic bulwarks, which can be carried by a bold assault. In 1552, the emperor, after long in vain besieging Mayence, coming one day to inspect a breach in the walls, exclaimed, "Et comment n'entre l'on point par là?" Paradin in this passage seems to describe the protestor who feels astonished there should be any difficulty in storming the Catholic city

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* Bacch. 655.

† De Div. Officiis.

through something that he mistakes for a breach *. "Comment n'entre l'on point par là?' is his exclamation every moment. When brought to the assault, however, and required to give a precise answer, their embarrassment supplies a great signal to all who possess fine observant souls.

Callipho, not being able to answer the questions of Stilpo, at the court of Ptolemy Soter, and demanding time, was thenceforth called *κρόνος*, or the temporizer. Afterwards, it was said by some, whose wisdom, it is to be hoped, exceeded their politeness, that the first letters of his name should be omitted to find his true name, that is, *ὄνος* †. The "well-named," when requested to answer many short questions, will generally leave you, as Euthryphro broke off from Socrates, when he pressed him to define sanctity, saying, "It must be another time; for I am in a hurry just now, and it is necessary I should depart." The Catholic child, armed with his catechism, replying in a few simple words, and saying, "Take this of me, my friend, which has the power to seal the accuser's lips," is often like the Astolfo of Boiardo, who was as ignorant as the other of the treasure he possessed in the enchanted lance, and unhorsed all comers against him, equally to their astonishment and his own. He might not, however, less truly say with Aumerle,—

"I have a thousand spirits in one breast,
To answer twenty thousand such as you."

When questions are proposed from that little book in the presence of protestors, the most notable sophisters are seen lying, turmoiling, as in Plato's dialogues, under the inevitable and merciless dilemmas of the Catholic, until he who looks on, were it Saturn himself, would be often robbed of more than a smile. The Catholic doctrine yields a certain logical power, which teaches even a youth, as Alanus de Insulis says,

——— "Frangere vires
Oppositas, partemque suam ratione tueri;
Vestigare fugam veri, falsumque fugare,
Schismaticos logicè, falsosque retundere fratres,
Et pseudologicos, et denudare sophistas ‡."

Protestantism does not confer exactly the same privilege. Often, in truth, it makes the "well-named" reasonless to reason as they do. We cannot indeed expect them to say with the king in Shakspeare, "I am perplexed, and know not what to say," leaving Catholics to reply with Pandulph, "What canst thou say, but will perplex thee more?" But they will evince perplexity, forget all their logic, and so supply a signal to the centre, when men see that the result of obstinately flying from it is to render

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* Cont. de l'Hist. de Nostre Temps.

† Cicero de Fin.

‡ Encyclopæd. lib. vii. c. 6.

that noble and most sovereign reason, "like sweet bells, jangled, out of tune, and harsh." They put an antic disposition on, pronouncing with a head-shake some ambiguous phrase, as "Well, well, we know; or, We could, an if we would; or, If we list to speak; or There be, an if they might;" or boldly giving out that they know sufficient, but that they must search their notes; like the emperor Paleologus, at the council of Florence, who said that he could answer all, if he only had his notes with him, which were in his house in Greece; to whom the cardinal Julian said, "Your majesty ought not to have left your armour at home when you came to contend." He must refer to his memoranda, and so, as Spenser says,—

"He cast about, and searcht his baleful bokes againe."

Very unsatisfactory, too, must prove the observation made from the first, and still too often verified, that Protestantism is not to be perfectly trusted in its citations or translations; of which fact a memorable example was given at the conference of Fontainbleau, in presence of Henry IV., when it was proved by the bishop of Evreux, and declared by the judges, that Philippe de Mornay, Seigneur du Plessis, and governor of Saumur, in his book against the holy mass, had, in citing Durandus, taken the objection for the solution—in citing St. Chrysostom twice, had omitted in both places a passage essential to the sense—in citing St. Jerome, had committed the same fault—in professing to cite St. Cyrill, had ascribed words to him which could not be found in his works—in citing St. Bernard, had joined together two sentences, suppressing what was at the end, to draw a meaning the contrary to what they were designed to establish; on which discovery the king wrote the same day to the Duc d' Espernon, saying, "Mon ami, le diocese d' Evreux a vaincu celui de Saumur *." Moreover, the calm observers generally see that such men, confronted with the Catholic, evince the spirit of the first James, king of England, in whom, as Pierre Mathieu says of those English Catholics who remonstrated with him, "their reasons do not find reason." It is the disease of not listening, the malady of not marking, that they are troubled with. As Balmes said of those in the first outbreak, "Every one prays, every one preaches, every one reads; but no one listens." One may truly say to them,—

"The reasons you allege do more conduce
To the hot passions of distemper'd blood,
Than to make up a free determination
'Twixt right and wrong; for pleasure and revenge
Have ears more deaf than adders to the voice
Of any true decision."

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* Pierre Mathieu, iii.

Nor is it more satisfactory to find men supporting their opinions by politely or grossly calumniating the Catholic Church —to observe how contempt has lent them his scornful perspective,—

> "Which warp'd the line of every other favour,
> Scorn'd a fair colour, or express'd it stolen;
> Extended or contracted all proportions
> To a most hideous object."

"It is to be noted," says St. Odo, "that Helius, studying with austerity to reprove Job, ascribes words to him which he never uttered; but so it often happens, that men who desire to censure others, in order to appear learned, and expert in their judgment, feign the things which they censure *." "You say, objects Helius to Job, that you are juster than God; but blessed Job never said so. And, again, other words he ascribes to him which you will no where find in the text; for the arrogant, when they cannot reprehend justly the things which are, reprehend with falsehood the things which are not †."

On this road, too, are met, to warn others, men like those described by Dante,

> ——"Reckless some
> Of error; others well aware they err."

"There are some," says St. Isidore, "who are unwilling to know, that they may have the excuse of ignorance, and be less culpable; but these do not defend, but rather deceive themselves, for to know not simply, belongs to ignorance, but to be unwilling to know is of contumacious pride ‡."

> ——"And what avails
> For their excuse, they do not see their harm."

"Qui avertit aurem suam, ne audiat legem," says the text, "oratio ejus erit execrabilis §." State the Catholic doctrine on any given point to a Protestor. He will often answer, that you have stated what he himself believes, but he will deny that you represent truly the Catholic doctrine. Charge him to refer to the council that defines it; he will not promise to refer to it—his tongue falters; you will not be able to extort such a promise from him. Note the fact, for it is profoundly significative. The holy fathers teach us that the Babylonian captivity, which signifies the captivity of the will, is greater than the Egyptian captivity, which signifies the captivity of the intelligence by

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* Mor. in Job, xxiii.

† Id. xxvi.

‡ De Sum. Bon. ii. 17.

§ Prov. xxviii. 9.

ignorance *." Better the way of Job, which ends in truth. "Causam quam non noveram diligenter investigabam." "If," says a celebrated writer, "to that great difficulty of well-doing what we certainly know, were not added in most men as great a carelessness of knowing what they ought to do, we had been, long ere this, much farther on our way to some degree of peace and happiness in this kingdom." "It is philosophically certain," as Frederick Schlegel says, "or if we may so speak, it is a truth grounded on psychological principles, that the will, and not the understanding, is in man the principal organ for the perception of divine truth. In man the understanding alone is not the principal organ for the perception of divine truth. The co-operation of the will is necessary, nay, the will must make the first advances towards truth." St. Columbanus relates a saying of the Arrian king Agilulfus—that if he could be convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith he would embrace it—"Fertur dixisse, si certum sciret, et ipse crederet †." Such conditional promises are still frequent; but, for the reasons already hinted at, they mean little, as perhaps those who make them feel assured. They may, in fact, be only another form of expression to signify that there is already, as the French say, "a side taken." Another general signal of the negative class is supplied by the unsatisfactory experience which Protestantism occasions in most of the minds which it has formed, or rather left without form, besides the independent results of individual character. The sun is very hot at Orhi—I am come from there, answers the adage. For the Basques, to explain their proverb, say that, once on a time, in winter, a bird, half-frozen, came to a nest, and finding another bird in it, tried to persuade him to leave it, saying that the sun was hot on the mountains of Orhi; but the other saw through him, and replied, he had just come from there, and that he knew what weather it was on the top ‡. In Protestantism, many say, is the climate of the soul. I am come from there, reply as many. Catholicity is welcomed then as the spring to the earth. "The Church Protestantism imparted to us children," says Goethe, "was, properly speaking, nothing but a kind of dry morality, and the doctrine appealed neither to the understanding nor to the heart."

Such is the weather there! There is a frigid liquid known to chemists, into which solid ice when dropped produces the same effect as red-hot iron in water. Those who know it well may be tempted to suggest, that in Protestantism every affirmative leads to similar results. Each cold approval, frigid as ice,

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* Ægid. Gabrielus, Specim. Mor. Christ. Præambula.

† Mab. Iter Italic.

‡ Le Roux de Lincy, Le Livre des Prov. Français.

acts upon it as an excess of fervour, which makes it boil. It renders men, like Demophon, Alexander's butler, who was warm in the shade and cold in the sun; so that they who retain any poetic affinity with truth are struck with remorse at their own work, and heard exclaiming, "Oh, if we freeze at noon, let us fear lest the sun for ever hide himself, and turn his orient steps from our ungrateful horizon, justly condemned to be eternally benighted!" Of a truth such fears are natural; for, before the influence of this element, it is an experimental certainty that all the ancient virtues are endangered—they often wholly perish.

"Non citius frondes autumni frigore tactas,
Jamque male hærentes, altâ rapit arbore ventus."

To heresy may be addressed the words, "Thou blastest all thou lookest upon. Away! seek shelter! through the sharp hawthorn blows the frigid wind. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen." Do you doubt it? Do you seek proof? See to what illogical, abrupt negations, to what lame and impotent conclusions the "well-named" are conducted. Behold the action of the reform in regard to all the tender mysteries of Christianity, mark the absence of all intimate veneration for the Mother of Christ. See how those who are not children of the Church, and members of the body of Christ, have no filial love for Mary; how they turn their back to her—how their heart is cold and indifferent, perhaps even actually filled with a secret aversion for her. Can such suitors prove agreeable to her son? Can such obduracy be sane? "Ab aquilone pandetur malum super omnes habitatores terræ." The spirit of pride, from frigid minds, bear witness to the truth of the denunciation; for it acts as the cold aspect of a sunless way, striking through the traveller's frame with a deadly chill.

"Ulterius nihil est, nisi non habitabile frigus;
Heu quam vicina est ultima terra mihi*!"

Why should any one hasten on such a road?

"Denique quid propero? Scythia est, quo mittimur; inquam,
Roma relinquenda est; utraque justa mora est†."

Menedemus rejected negative, and only admitted affirmative propositions. He would not suit the self-styled reformed school, or the generations formed by it, which seem still employed in trying what branches may be yet further lopped off from the tree of religion, what may be yet renounced, or, to use language

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* Trist. iii. 4.

† i. 3.

describing the greatest of all innovations and progresses, what more lost in hell, or what more truth denied in heaven.

——— "Oh! sad thought
Of a religion which hath cast out love,
And with it godly fear; whose boasted faith
Doth nought but gainsay things invisible,
The sacraments, and that which gives them force,
The orders in Melchizedek's high line."

Protestant denials comprise even what can be seen, heard, and touched, so that they might be classed among phenomena by naturalists, whose language even can be applied to them, as when Pliny demands, How can these men deny what we see every day, and affirm what we know to be false? "Non multa æque fabulosa produnt poetæ. Sed hoc ea in re, quæ quotidie inveniatur atque abundet, et hoc mendacium coarguat, serio quenquam dixisse, summa hominum contemtio est, et intoleranda mendaciorum impunitas." The truth, however, is that their very eyes are sometimes like their judgments blind, and proof is called impossibility. There is a wish to contradict, so obstinately strong, that "it doth invert the attest of eyes and ears, as if those organs had deceptious functions, created only to calumniate." The negation of Catholicism hath no such taste of madness. Certainly that contrast is most significative. In general, the love of suspicion and the desire to doubt argue a diseased, and not a sound intelligence. It is the saying of Humboldt, in his Cosmos, that "a presumptuous scepticism, which rejects facts without examination of their truth, is in some respects even more injurious than an unquestioning credulity, it being the tendency of both to impede accurate investigation." Protestantism, after evincing all its critical sagacity, finds itself absurdly at fault, even in regard to life around it. The popular mind, as formed by Catholicism, it can never comprehend. It mistakes every thing. Its suspicions, even, excited by what it observes in Catholic Churches, give rise to scenes that resemble the incident described by Chateaubriand, who finding a crowd attracted at his inn door by a desire of seeing the author of the Génie du Christianisme, as he entered his carriage, demanded of a young peasant girl, who stood laughing upon a bench, whether she was deriding him, and received for answer, "Non, c'est que je suis si contente!" Protestantism mistakes the joy that mingles with popular devotion for the sarcasm of a spirit that derides it. Catholics are, of all guides, those whose offers should most please the human mind, "non enim sumus ii," they may say with the philosopher, "quorum vagetur animus errore, nec habeat umquam quid sequatur *." So Schiller represents

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* De Off. ii. 2.

his penitent and heroic youth exclaiming, "Who will give me certainty? All is so dark—a confused labyrinth—no outlet—no guiding star. This burning thirst after happiness—this ideal of unattained perfection—this looking to an hereafter for the fulfilment of our hopes—this contrast between the harmony of the inanimate and the discord of the intellectual world,—who will explain all this?" Catholicism knows and reveals the secret, and imparts certainty, not as an illustrious author insinuates, by a representation which shows only the doubts on one part, and only the evidence on the other, but by arguments which to some may be new and unexpected, without being the less fair and potent, by the force of a strictly logical deduction from principles that cannot be shaken, and, above all, by eliciting that great combined act of the will and understanding which constitutes divine faith. Insensibility to such attraction is ascribed by ancient authors to the demon, as the father of all contradiction. "Antechristus vocatur Antemost," says St. Anselm, or a contemporary, "id est, contrarius; vel, Arneomai, id est, nego*." The spirit of contradiction, in matters of faith, renders man his own enemy. What most he should dislike, seems pleasant to him—what like, offensive. "The devil wishing," says Ægidius, "to persuade man, blinded by sin, that he cannot come to the knowledge of truth, invents many opinions to show that it is impossible, and then he persuades him, laying aside truth, to live on probability, and instils the maxims of the Academicians, cum agit quisque quod ei videtur probabile nec peccat nec errat; and since each man's opinion is probable to himself, it ends in each man following his own opinion, or what is still farther, in following the opinion of any one else who chooses to persuade him. Hence, all heretics argue that their respective sects are probable, and, consequently, that it is not necessary for them to embrace any one faith as the Catholic and Roman †." The devil's snares of probabilities are great—"non enim," says St. Leo, "in solo opere virtutum, aut in sola observantia mandatorum, sed etiam in tramite fidei angusta et ardua via est quæ ducit ad vitam, et magni laboris est magnique discriminis inter dubias imperitorum opiniones et verisimiles falsitates, per unam sanæ doctrine semitam inoffensis gressibus ambulare, et, cum undique se laquei erroris opponant, omne periculum deceptionis evadere."

Heresy says to each waverer, like Dido to Æneas,—

———— "Neque te teneo, neque dicta refello:
I sequere Italiam ventis, pete regna per undas‡."

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* Elucidarium.

† Ægid. Gabriel., Specimina Moral. Diabolicæ, § 21.

‡ Æn. iv. 380.

Like the Trojans, those whom it misleads may behold weeping the vast sea of doubt before them,—

> ———— "Heu! tot vada fessis
> Et tantum superesse maris! vox omnibus una.
> Urbem orant; tædet pelagi perferre laborem*."

She not the less commits them to it; while the Catholic Church is heard saying to her guides, in the words of Ives de Chartres to Manasses, "It is your office to seek, through pathless wilds, for the sheep that were scattered in the day of clouds and darkness, and to bring them back to the fold—licet velint errare, licet velint perire†." If one did not fear to use language that might sound paradoxical, or designed to captivate a morbid taste, one could affirm, without violating the substance of truth, that Protestantism was in full action during the magistracy of our Lord on earth. The same mind was insanely hypercritical, and irrationally incredulous, as now. Many of the Jews, we read—not all the Jews who were present at the raising of Lazarus—believed in the divinity of Jesus. This corpse in corruption was become a living man; the voice of Jesus had raised it to life; and all the witnesses of this act did not adore the Son of Mary. No doubt, these "philosophers" thought it less probable that the dead could be raised to life, than that all the senses of some observers could be deceived. Well might an historian of Jerusalem express amaze at such a lugubrious miracle; but the spirit which produced it is still visible on earth. It holds the same language still as that of the Jews, who said to Christ, "Quousque animam nostram tollis? Si tu es Christus, dic nobis palam;" of whom St. Augustin says, "Non veritatem desiderabant sed calumniam præparabant‡." In this respect, they seek not to see: "Squamam in oculis emovendam," as Pliny says, "potius quam extrahendam§." In one sense, Protestantism may be natural to man; for, as St. Augustin says, "Et omnes aut penè omnes homines amamus nostras suspiciones vel vocare vel existimare cognitiones, quando credibilibus rerum signis movemur, cum credibilia nonnulla sint falsa, sicut incredibilia nonnulla sunt vera‖." And, as Butler says, "it plainly requires a degree of modesty and fairness beyond what every one has, for a man to say, not to the world, but to himself, that there is a real appearance of somewhat of great weight in this matter, though he is not able thoroughly to satisfy himself about it; but it shall have its influence upon him in proportion to its appearing reality and weight. It is much more easy, and more falls in with the negligence, presumption,

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* Æn. v. 615.
† Ep. 102.
‡ In Joan. Tract. 48.
§ xxix. 8.
‖ Ep. liv.

and wilfulness of the generality, to determine at once with a decisive air, there is nothing in it*." Protestantism holds language like that of Don Juan in Molière: "Il y a bien quelque chose là-dedans que je ne comprends pas; mais, quoique ce puisse être, cela n'est pas capable ni de convaincre mon esprit, ni d'ébranler mon âme†." To such sceptics, the words of St. Thomas, referring to the fallen angels, might apply:—

"Non plane sunt obcæcati,
Sed plane sunt obstinati
In suâ malitiâ‡."

To each we may say, in old Homer's words with Ulysses,—

θυμὸς δέ τοι αἰὲν ἄπιστος§.

Or, as Minerva says to him,—

Αἰεί τοι τοιοῦτον ἐνὶ στήθεσσι νόημα ‖.

Or again,—

Ἦ μάλα τίς τοι θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἄπιστος¶.

This protestor seeks, too, always to disseminate his doubts, as is indicated in the complaint of Chaucer's shipman:—

"This loller here wal prechen us somewhat.
He wal sowen some difficultee,
Or springen cockle in our clene corne."

But it is harder to reconcile such a sense with that primitive faith which brings such consolation, than with that compunctious visiting to which St. Francis appealed when he said, "As all who saw our Lord Jesus Christ according to his humanity, and did not see or believe him according to his Divinity as the Son of God, were condemned, so now, all those who see the sacrament sanctified on the altar by the hands of the priest in the form of bread and wine, and do not see or believe according to the spirit of divinity, that it is truly the most holy body of our Lord, are condemned**." Antonio de Guevara styles heretics "bone-breakers," men who break the bones of Christ. "Perchance," says St. Augustin, "it is good to sit and speak not against a brother, but against all brothers in all nations constituted, to whom the prophets bear testimony when it is said, 'In semine

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[*] Anal. ii. 7.
[†] Le Festin de Pierre.
[‡] Sum. Theol. Rhyth. Synopsis.
[§] xiv. 150.
[‖] xiii. 330.
[¶] xiv. 391.
[**] S. Francisci, Verba sacræ Admonitionis ad omnes Fratres suos, cap. i.

tuo benedicentur omnes gentes.' And again, 'Ab ortu solis usque ad occasum sacrificium mundum offertur nomini meo, quoniam glorificatum est nomen meum in gentibus, dicit Dominus.' 'Mark that,' saith the Lord — not saith Donatus or Rogatus, but saith the Lord. And again, we read, 'Et replebitur gloriâ ejus omnis terra. Fiat, fiat.' And you sit at Cartenna, and, with some ten others who remain, you say, 'Non fiat, non fiat.' Do you not fear lest the Jews should hold you in mockery, and say, 'Where is, then, according to your ideas, what your Paul understood as the Church, when he said, "Lætare, sterilis—quoniam multi filii desertæ magis quam ejus qui habet virum," placing the multitude of Christians as far beyond that of the Jews, if the Church of Christ be your poverty.' To how many," continues the holy doctor, "are the approaches closed by the rumours of the calumniators, who pretend I know not what? How many think that it is of no importance in what party they are Christians, so remaining in the sect of Donatus because they were born in it, and that no one constrains them to pass to the Catholics[*]!" Bone-breakers! Yes, the term is just; for the last logic, the last term of Protestantism is, to leave nothing whole. As a learned author observes, "It is its providential destiny to reduce even its own establishments to dust and atoms. It is a solvent so active, an agent so corrosive, that it finishes by devouring itself, after having denied, overthrown, broken, and destroyed all things[†]." The experience of each day demonstrates that the "well-named" represent every thing as problematical. Their best writers use a language that is strange and unknown to the Catholic Church, as when even the admirable Butler says, "the doctrine of the Gospel appears to be[‡];" for it is clear, as Cicero observes, "eos, qui aliquid sibi videri dicant, non ipsos in eâ sententiâ esse, sed audire velle contraria[§]." In general, the greatest certainty we can expect to hear from them, might be expressed in the old Homeric line,—

Τοῦτό τί μοι κάλλιστον ἐνὶ φρεσὶν εἴδεται εἶναι[||].

But is this Christian language? Is it satisfactory to a mind naturally distrustful of itself? And, after all, weariness is the result of following men who are "nothing if not critical." Of each of whom we might so truly say,—

"Disdayne he called was, and did disdayne
To be so call'd, and who so did him call."

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[*] Ep. xlviii.

[†] Freudenfeld, Tableau analytique de l'Hist. Univers.

[‡] Analogy ii. 5.

[§] De Finibus, ii. 1.

[||] ix. 2.

Men will at last recoil from him, and say with Corin, in Shakspeare,—

"You have too courtly a wit for me; I'll rest."

Or, as Sintram sung,—

"Too long have I trod upon ice and snow;
I seek the bowers where roses blow."

The influence of the new opinions upon language supplies, however, a signal that ought to be remarked before we proceed farther. Each word, hallowed by old Catholic usage, and current by popular tradition, is thought by those who have thoroughly imbibed the spirit of the "well-named," to be suspicious, and thenceforth is used in a new sense, as if the wisest and best words were not to some or other suspicious. So the very first words that should be taught a child are perverted from their sweet meaning, and made to destroy themselves; the word itself being set against the word. Protestantism, by profession a corruptor of words, has a language as well as a countenance, and a heart of its own; and were it to succeed thoroughly in supplanting that which derived so much of its beauty from the thoughts of Catholic times, there would be reason for preferring, in some respects, that of the wandering tribes from Egypt or Hindostan, which, we are told, has only supplied the English tongue with such harmless sounds as "hoax" and "jockey." It has been said, that with the Persian no language would be able to vie in beauty, had not the Persians, in adopting the religion of Mahomet, unfortunately introduced into their speech an infinity of words of the rude coarse language used by the barbaric Arab tribes, the immediate followers of the warlike prophet*. The idiom of disdain, of dissection, of suspicion and unbelief, is not favourable to the beauty of a language. It was used in Gaul long ago by the Pagans, who had terms to make heresy now envious, as when they called the Christians "Romans," and "the salted," from the grain of salt used in baptism, which mocking denomination was applied to the faithful for many years. When Protestants impose names on the things which they find existing around them, they have not exactly the privilege of Adam in his state of innocence, when we read, "Quod vocavit Adam, ipsum est nomen ejus†." Milton has consecrated such terms, you will say, and made them classical. True, it seems overbold to censure the vocabulary of an universal favourite, with whom, since Addison wrote, "readers of every class think it necessary to be pleased." Yet some have had the courage to say, that

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* Borrow's Gypsies in Spain.

† Gen. ii.

——————— "Upon his eyes
There was the film, sad antitype of that
Which closed his spirit against the Light of light—
The co-eternal Son! And, blinded thus,
Hath he not blinded with irreverence
Dear England's sons, with Jewish legends strain'd,
And ill transplanted into Christian lands?
Never may I, from fear of hurting man,
Claim aught of poet's brotherhood with one
Who disbelieved thy Godhead! never seek
To find some beauty in a man whose creed
Destroy'd all beauty, carrying secret bane
Into the ramifyings, roots, and filaments
Of all that stately seeming tree of song,
Beneath whose shadow so many hearts
Have loved to dwell.
——————— O banish'd from our love
Be any who dishonoureth his love!
——————— We, in Milton's verse,
Have well nigh lost the Paradise reveal'd
To Christians*."

Humboldt remarks, that feelings ennoble language. Catholicism, so rich in sensibility, renders it moving, sublime, and true to nature. Faith, too, renders it exquisitely pure. "One is always filled with admiration," says Chateaubriand, after citing a letter of Monseigneur Quelen, the Archbishop of Paris, along with other answers which he had himself received on the same subject from literary writers of the modern philosophy, men of the pen in power, "when one considers how religion ennobles style, and how it imparts to common-place matters a gravity and a decorum which are immediately felt."

In a mere literary point of view, Shenstone remarked, that "Pope's religion is often found very advantageous to his descriptive talents;" and he cites instances produced by allusions to the Catholic ritual†. But language can hardly fail to be deteriorated, when the eyes and ears of men become like those of poor Titania, in the presence of Bottom, with an ass's head, when she said to him,—

"I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again;
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape:
And thou art wise as thou art beautiful."

Language cannot long with impunity be employed in praising error and in maligning truth. In general, men of the old school wrote with a certain gracefulness, even when their language was defective; "their words raised up beautiful ideas, sed vos,"

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* Morris.

† Essays on Men, &c.

to use the orator's expression, "squalidius*;" or, as he says elsewhere, "Invidiosam atrocitatem verborum habes." Mark your national tone of discourse and writing—even the language of your diplomatists, that of your ministers of state, of your greatest and lowest men, from your Lord High Chancellors to your leading journalists,—why, 'tis a boisterous and cruel style, a style for challengers, of men who defy like Turk to Christian. Your words in public and in private, whether emanating from the roughest of the rabble, or from the proudest of your nobility, seem best adapted for a brawl, when men rail in the streets. The hate they breathe might remind one of the buffoon of Calderon, who says, "I am furious at first against the whole human race in general, and then, in particular, against all those of whom I have any knowledge, especially my masters, both the young and the old one." What becomes of style, of purity of diction, of that lofty and inspiring eloquence which appeals to the noblest faculties of men, when the "well-named," however practised in rhetoric, are caught speaking as they think, as they ruminate, and giving their "worst of thoughts the worst of words?" It is another question what must be in the heart the while; though, assuredly, it is but natural to proceed from the expression to consider the mind which dictates it, and to repeat the words which a poet addresses to one subjected to such impressions, saying,—

"Better conquest never canst thou make
Than arm thy constant and thy nobler parts
Against these giddy, loose suggestions."

In regard to the intelligence, a sense of the magnitude of such an evil may easily direct some to the centre. "The world has always seen," as Pierre Mathieu says, "a sufficient number of anti-papists, who pointed their pens and darted their tongues against the Leos, the Gregories, the Clements, and the Innocents of Catholicity†." Rome, in connexion with them, is a theme whereof their tongue is never weary. "Approaching nearer and nearer to the centre of Romanism," says Goethe, (for we need only cite their greatest authors,) "boxed up with a priest in a sedan, and striving anxiously to observe without prejudice true nature and noble art, I have arrived at a vivid conviction, that all traces of original Christianity are extinct here." Of such vivid convictions, every protesting traveller is provided with his store. He thinks that he can never feed too much on this dislike; and, in fact, he finds his advantage in it; for though he can only promise and predict—though he is a kind of nothing, titleless, till he has forged himself a name in

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* De Finibus, iv. 2.

† Hist. de Hen. IV. liv. 6.

that fire of burning Rome which he foretells, applause and honour await him at his return. And yet, sooner or later, many learn to "rate sad words of discord against the holy see from unascetic souls, as naught, or less than naught." Lysias, having asked Diogenes if he believed there were gods, "How," replied he, "should I not believe, since I believe that you are the enemy of the gods?" Protestantism, by its hatred, may be said thus to prove the truth which keeps it in existence. It is no less significative by its impossibilities. Protestants themselves feel that it is not merely the remains of heathen art, or the association of heathen studies, that cause so many to undertake long solitary journeys, and to seek, as Goethe says, "that centre towards which they are attracted by an irresistible impulse." They admit, with him, that they feel "the attraction of the magic circle of Rome." They are heard to express, like him, their belief, that in Rome is the high school for all the world. They say, "People would do well if, tarrying there for years together, they observed awhile a Pythagorean silence." They do not think it possible in the Roman climate to continue the works which are to embody their philosophy, though they express a hope that "something of the air of this heaven may be imparted to the closing books." Heresy will still, of course, from its distant dens, repeat, year after year, its menacing notes; but its credulous champions, in their boastful defiance of the Holy See, might find a mirror of their own impotence in Buonaparte, when, without possessing a bark, he declared the British Islands in a state of blockade. Sheer transparent calumny, too, is often used to form a ground for heretical doubts, heretical delays, and suspicions. "Have you considered my servant Job, quod non sit ei similis super terram?" "Yet lo!" adds the abbot of Cluny, St. Odo, "whom truth declares to be just without comparison, Heliu affirms to be without comparison a sinner qui bibit subsannationem quasi aquam, qui graditur cum operationibus iniquitatum. But this," he adds in conclusion, "is the constant practice of the arrogant*."

Have you considered the Catholic Church, how there is nothing like it upon earth? Have you considered Rome in its mystic character, verifying, in a sense so wonderful, the praise bestowed upon it by Martial, in the line,—

"Vox diversa sonat: populorum est vox tamen una?"

Have you considered the Holy See, to which the lines of the old poet, in praise of the Roman sovereignty under Theodosius the Great, are so applicable:—

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* Mor. in Job xxiv.

> "Hæc est, in gremium victos quæ sola recepit,
> Humanumque genus communi nomine fovit
> Matris, non dominæ, ritu; civesque vocavit
> Quos domuit, nexuque pio longinqua revinxit.
> Hujus pacificis debemus moribus omnes,
> Quod veluti patriis regionibus utitur hospes*."

In vain you hope for a mild or even rational answer. "It is Babylon; it is the type of spiritual wickedness," reply the "well-named." They can find defects in every part of it—in its faith, in its discipline, in its learning, in its architecture. But then what is there, in heaven or earth, that is found to be proof against their criticism? Goethe, describing Hofrath Huisgen, of the reformed religion, expresses displeasure at finding him always sketching the world from the distorted side. "I observed," he says, "from his appearance on one occasion, that he meant to close the game of conversation with an important trump card. He shut tight his blind left eye, looked sharply out of the other, and said in a nasal voice, 'Even in God I discover defects.'" Protestantism contrives to impart the same daring to the unlettered, small-knowing soul, in which it thrives best, as history and experience testify; for, if you hold it very dear, one may generally set it down for certain, that "the common curse of mankind, folly and ignorance, is thine in great revenue." Only in countries of thirst from worldly wisdom, and pathless through ignorance, did it take root. In Germany, with its many universities, no elementary schools existed; nor was instruction gratuitous, as in Italy†.

In England, during the reign of such a despot as John, the people had quite patiently endured the privation of the Divine worship, consequent on the interdict, and the great lords had been highly pleased at the sufferings of the bishops and other ecclesiastics; so that instead of avoiding the excommunicated tyrant, they chose that time for testifying a zeal in his royal service which they had never manifested on any other occasion‡. It was in such lands that the pride and the disdain of men, who despised clues which their fathers were entrusted with that they might have an understanding heart, destroyed all unity and order, recalling chaos, and rendering the intellectual world like the unformed matter of the earth, when the light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. "Ascendunt usque ad cœlos, et descendunt usque ad abyssos, turbati sunt et moti sunt sicut ebrius, et omnis sapientia eorum devovata est." "In a vision," says Marina d'Escobar, "I

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* Claudian.

† Audin. Hist de Leon X. 597.

‡ Hurter, Gesch. Inn. III. lib. xiii.

beheld a glorious solemnity, in the celestial Jerusalem, in honour of the adorable Eucharist; and as the angels passed before it, they scattered mystic and ineffable lights, manifesting the majesty and truth of that divine mystery, and exciting men to love and honour it. While they were thus employed, I saw many demons attentively and carefully warding off these divine glories, lest the heretics and infidels should be touched by them, which these perfidious ministers did so dexterously, that I shudder to think of it. I observed these demons, when they saw these holy lights attain to some regions in which Catholics live mixed with heretics, work with such art, that nothing from all these lights and fiery rays, penetrating the Catholics, could reach the heretics. Only I saw, in a certain town of England, of which I know not the name, that there was a great palace, not lofty, indeed, but very extensive, which, on one side, was contiguous to the town, and on the other, faced a vast lawn. Upon this house many of these lights from heaven fell, and the inhabitants felt certain effects; but, nevertheless, they remained perplexed and timid, determining nothing then*."

To search for the sake of searching, to doubt for the sake of doubting, cannot lead to general and permanent satisfaction; and through what regions Protestantism wanders thus—

"Dicere longa mora est; quærenti defuit orbis."

What trust can be reposed in guides who have thus to grope their own way?

τὸν γὰρ φασὶ μέγιστον ἐπουρανίων κεχολῶσθαι,
Εἴ κεν ὁδοῦ ζαχρεῖον ἀνήνηταί τις ὁδίτην.

The Athenians counted it an impiety not to show the way to persons gone astray, and they had a hymn which was sung in their public worship, which pronounced them execrable who refused to do it. The Jews were said to have a custom never to show the way excepting to Jews. Protestantism cannot be so accused, since its zeal, which scatters the leaves that contain falsehood upon rocks and bushes, is unwearied to mislead the wanderer. It offers itself to every one,—

——— "deceptaque decipit omnes†."

"But he, indeed, was very evil ledd,
When such an one had guiding of the way
That knew not whether right he went, or else astray."

These false guides do more than turn an indigent traveller from the way. They cut the cable, to let him drift to the rapids of

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* Vit. Marinæ d'Escobar, p. ii. lib. i. c. 46.

† Ovid. Met. xiv. 81.

the stream on which he is embarked; for Protestantism only qualifies a man to wield the hatchet of Tenes. Cycnus was on the point of stepping on the shore of Tenedos, while fastening the cable of his bark to a tree or rock, when Tenes, inflexible in his opposition, cut it with a hatchet, and the vessel was carried back, and became the sport of wind and waves*.

So it is here, when men who are preparing to fasten their light skiff to the rock of faith, are sent back by Protestantism adrift to the deep ocean of the Scriptures, and told to steer themselves through those immense waters where only those who have on board the sworn and accredited Pilot can be safe; "for all language," as Butler observes, and that of the Bible, exposed to insidious translations, assuredly cannot be excepted, "is in its very nature inadequate, ambiguous, liable to infinite abuse, even from negligence; and so liable to it from design, that every man can deceive and betray by it †." "The cause of heresy," says St. Isidore, "is for the exercise of faith, but the occasion is the obscurity of the divine Scriptures ‡. Lest satiety," he says, "should arise from clearness, there are in the Scriptures obscure and occult things to excite desire; for the more things are concealed the more do they awaken desire §." The abbot Joachim says, that they who vehemently and excessively press the sense of the sacred Scriptures elicit blood, and that the carnal intelligence which kills the soul seeks such occupation. "Ideo sapere debemus," he adds, "ad sobrietatem, quia violenter interpretando aut carnaliter sapiendo sacras Scripturas eas violamus ||." "Times and many things besides must be distinguished," says Robert d'Arbriselle, "when any one wishes to understand the Scriptures ¶;" and this proves that they never were intended to constitute the rule of faith; which fact, indeed, their inspired authors fail not to indicate, as when St. John wrote, "I had many things to write unto thee; but I would not by ink and pen write to thee. But I hope speedily to see thee, and we will speak mouth to mouth **." "Nevertheless," says St. Ephrem, "heretics wishing to prove their errors endeavour to support them by texts from the divine Scriptures ††."

——— "The book of God is forced to yield to man's
Authority, or from its straightness warp'd;"

for error seeks to support itself by limiting its own grants; as in Ismalism, according to which the Word lives only in the book, the Coran being the eternal self-existing Word, God having

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* Pausanias, lib. x.

† Analogy, ii. 3.

‡ De Sum. Bon. lib. i. c. 19.

§ Id. 18.

|| Sup. Hierem. c. xvii.

¶ Opus Quadripartit. iv.

** Epist. 3 of St. John.

†† S. Eph. Tractat. c. 8.

spoken, but speaking no more on earth: while in opposition to this essential doctrine of the Mahometans, the caliphs, like Protestant kings and doctors, have tried to claim authority in divine things, although the principle of the religion rejects it. Yet even Milton approves of such inconsistency, for after enumerating what he terms "the helps, which we enjoy now, to make more easy the attainment of Christian religion by the meanest," he adds, "the entire Scripture translated into English with plenty of notes." The devil cited Scripture to our Saviour Himself, but, as St. Chrysostom remarks, "he mutilated the text, leaving out what was against him." "The devil wished to show himself learned," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "yet he failed in three things. First, he depraved the Scriptures, applying to the head what was said of the body. Secondly, because the authority did not apply to the question, 'Scriptum est.' What is written there, malignant one? He has given his angels charge, ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis. Nunquid in præcipitiis? Thirdly, because he did not cite the whole passage. Go on, malignant one. Why omit what makes against you?—Super aspidem et basiliscum, &c.*" In all this his members at the present day imitate him in order to deceive the simple. Here follow many, forming the college of the mourning hypocrites, who clothe their naked villany

"With old odd ends, stol'n forth of holy writ;
And seem all saints where most they play the devil."

St. Augustin says to the Manichæans, "In Evangelio quod vultis creditis, quod non vultis hoc non creditis. Non Evangelio sed vobis ipsis creditis †." It is the same with respect to what Protestantism loves. "It has been observed long since," says a recent author, "that the Evangelicals love and worship not in general Christ, but an inward feeling of their own minds; and attention has been called to the fact, that it is not where He is mentioned in Scripture, but where faith is mentioned, that they are active and awake, dwelling with interest on the inspired page; while worshipping their own idea of justification by faith alone." Now in all this there is something that must, sooner or later, produce dissatisfaction, since whatever withdraws the mind from loving and revering what is external to itself, closes more or less the fountain of joy. Accordingly, even their best paid and most favourite work of distributing Bibles, seems not fully to content them; since we hear them complain of wandering in the unthankful task of distributing the Gospel among the children of Spain, which occupation, indeed, may naturally pain them, since

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* Dom. i. Quad.

† Cont. Faust. xvi. 3.

it involves ingenious and intelligent men in such contradictions that after repeatedly acknowledging the supereminent charity of that people, they feel called upon to utter such exclamations as these: "Unhappy land! Not until the pure light of the Gospel has illumined thee, wilt thou learn that the greatest of all gifts is charity." But there is another consideration that can direct right those men who are taught to misapply the Bible. "You say," says Salvian, "that the heretics read the same Scriptures as we do. How so, when they read them interpolated and ill-delivered, and partly vitiated? They have no safety who lose plenitude, and are deprived of the virtue of the sacraments. We alone have the sacred Scriptures full, inviolate, perfect, drawing them from the purest fountains by the ministry of a pure translation. These Arians, even when they have a pure translation, have a corrupt version by the tradition of their masters; and by this tradition rather than by the Scriptures they hold, not what the truth of the law proclaims, but what the depravity of evil tradition has inserted, for these Arian barbarians, void of human learning, who know nothing but what they hear from their doctors, follow that, and so by necessity they know the divine law more by teaching than by reading, and therefore retain that instruction rather than the law. The tradition of their masters is therefore inveterate and as a law. They are heretics; but not therefore conscious: with us they are heretics, but not in their own eyes, but rather it is we who are heretics in their judgment. Truth is with us, but they think it is with them; they are in error, but they esteem it the height of religion; they are impious, but they think it true piety. They err, but it is with an honest mind, believing that they honour God. How they are to be punished for their false opinions in the day of judgment no one can know but the Judge. Meanwhile I think that God has patience with them, and has pity on them, knowing that their error is not voluntary. All those of whom I speak are either Vandals or Goths, for I speak not of heretics who are Romans, for they are in every respect viler than all *."

Now such an apology, which embraces all that can be advanced in favour of the modern eclectics with respect to their sacred books, which they have repeatedly acknowledged to be defective, and in such strong language, that I prefer leaving to others to cite the testimony of the petitioners to King James the First, of the ministers of Lincoln, in their address to the crown, or of Broughton, in his letter to the lords of the council, is not calculated to lull to a perfect sense of security those who may sometimes hear it urged for themselves. Even on the hypothesis of their having a pure version, it was evident from first

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* De Gubernat. Dei, lib. v. 3.

to last that the results of this Scripture reading were not such as these men had predicted. The practical consequences would rather have verified the ancient observation, that in regard to the sacred books some men resemble serpents, which, while they feed on sweetest flowers, prove that they can breed poison. "Upon the whole," says Balmes, "never was there greater folly than that of the Protestants, when they put the Bible into the hands of every one, saying that each might interpret it for himself. By the principle of the Bible being the religion of Protestants, and that each is to judge of it by his own understanding, Protestantism is self-condemned, for it lays down a principle by which it dissolves itself*."

Again; assuredly it is difficult not to remark the signal to truth presented by the inadequacy of mere individual opinions in matters of religion, from whatever source drawn, as a substitute for the Catholic faith. Balmes too observes, "that the more advanced and complicated civilization becomes, the greater need is there for the living rule of Catholicity, and the more dangerous would be that of private examination†." We have only to look around us to see proof; so true it is that what error leads must err. The history of the march of these opinions is the record of a succession of prodigious mistakes which have been maintained by men appealing to their own personal conviction independent of all authority for their warrant. It is indeed not surprising to witness such extravagances, when one may truly say of their common parent, "Hæresim aperuisse est eam refutasse." Surely, to give a plain unvarnished statement of Calvinism, or of Anglicanism, is to refute it. Yet impassioned men will cling to this; or rather, like the charmed vest of Hercules, heresy will attach itself to the very flesh of the man who unconsciously clothes himself with it :—

——— "Capit inscius heros,
Induiturque humeris Lernææ virus Echidnæ."

In vain will he even seek deliverance; for

——— "Letiferam conatur scindere vestem:
Quà trahitur, trahit illa cutem ‡."

Hence St. Augustin says, "nihil infelicius est homine cui sua figmenta dominantur." But, if the Catholic should err, we find that his fictions sit lightly on him. At the first word of the Church he flings them from him to the winds. Thus many, like the abbot Joachim, see their books condemned and themselves

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* Ch. vii.

† Le Prot. comparé au Cath. ch. vi.

‡ Met. ix.

honoured. Pope Honorius III. wrote to the Archbishop of Cossance, and to the Bishop of Bisignan, to correct and punish those who should treat the abbot Joachim as a heretic, on the ground of his book against Peter Lombard having been condemned at the Council of Lateran. His bull, dated 16 calends of January, ends thus: "though the said book was condemned in the council, yet as the abbot Joachim submitted all his works to the judgment of the Roman Church, as the mother of all the faithful, we command your fraternity to publish through all Calabria, that we repute him a Catholic man and follower of the holy orthodox faith, and to chastise all who presume henceforth to insult him *." God indeed must be worshipped in purity and truth, "Colendi autem ratio," as Pope Gregory XIII. said to Otho, duke of Brunswick, "non in hominum opinionibus sita est, sed in ea veritate, cujus lumine immensa Dei bonitas Ecclesiam suam usque ab Apostolis illustravit; sic enim colendus est Deus, ut ipse coli vult, non ut hominum quotidie insania comminiscitur." To him who subtilizes with men in order to withdraw them from the Catholic authority, there will assuredly be always some to say in reply, that they are not willing to turn from the plain and simple to such tortuous and obscure ways which could never have been designed by God for the majority of mankind. What difficulties in the Protestant rule, which none really follow! What obscurity in their doctrines, when they have any! Speaking of Rullus, the Roman orator says, "He delivered a long discourse, et verbis valde bonis. There was only one thing which seemed to me as a fault, namely, that from such a crowd of auditors there was no one found who could understand what he said. Whether he did this for the sake of practising any deceit, or from being delighted with this kind of eloquence, I know not †." Such are many of the lucubrations, pastorals, letters, and treatises of the "well-named," which may naturally suggest the poet's admonition—

"Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.
To mix with thy concernments I desist
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own."

From the misty and paradoxical associations of such abusers of the vague, many in fact will turn to the region of Catholic distinctness with as much pleasure as men feel when they exchange northern fogs for the bright Euganean mountains, showing such a variety of forms with that great purity and sharpness of outline which constitutes the chief beauty of an Italian horizon. What clear intelligence can be attracted by their proposals and

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* Ap. Jean M. de Vernon la Vie de Raymond Lulle.

† Cont. Rullum.

hopes when conjuring up their mists to involve lucid and certain things in obscurity? What has the world gained by their art of dissecting and breaking up, and raising clouds of jealousies, and suspicions, and enmities? No one need wonder, or condemn men who reply to heresy,—

> "Hence! and trouble us not—
> For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,
> Fill'd it with cursing cries, and deep exclaims."

Suppose their speculations and theories ever so plausible to pride, the human spirit, from a cold airy flight returning, will seek with joy the things whose truth depends not on its shaping*; and it will leave those men to their work who, like Arachne and Pallas, are contending who shall weave their tissues best†. "We are warned," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "not to believe those who will exclaim—Ecce, hic est Christus; illic est Christus; but to remember Lot's wife. O clear prophecy of our times! for what else cry these heretics, unless Christ is here, Christ is there? Christ is not, say they, in the Canons, nor in the Sacraments, nor in the observances of religion, nor in the sacred mass, nor in the exterior ceremonies of faith, nor in the regular hours of praise, nor in fasting and abstinence, nor in the ecclesiastical mode of life which the Church has every where observed from the time of the Apostles; but 'lo! He is here,' says Luther; 'lo! He is there,' says Œcolampadius; 'lo! there,' says each one according to his fancy, for no two of them can agree together where He is‡." All that remains is a restless disquietude, as unproductive as the pride which causes it is sterile; multitudes agitate themselves, as a great author says, "without knowing why—famished flocks which recognize no pastor, which run from the plain to the mountain, and from the mountain to the plain, disdaining the experience of the shepherd hardened to the wind and to the sun. All is transitory; every one interprets religion and morality after his own fashion—the renown of no one lasts beyond an hour; a book grows obsolete in a day. In vain the efforts of writers to draw attention; no one hears even their last sigh." Hence a bitter voice of lamentation was heard lately, complaining that men were found to say,

> ——— "Unity
> Thou fancied bliss, I have no need of thee!"

and then to add what follows:—

> "Ah! they that with this vaunting language swell
> Know little of the misery of doubt,

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* Purg. 15. † Met. vi. 3. ‡ De Div. August. ii.

Nor of the heaviness of earnest hearts.
I know not why, but, whensoe'er I view
The star-lit heaven, it ever seems to me
So very full of unity and peace,
And solemn joy, as though it could instil
A quiet into weariness of heart,
And purposely was framed to speak to man
Of vital unity which spirits have."

You invoke the force of idiosyncracy, and ask how it can be reconciled with the union of Catholic hearts; but St. Bernard would not have deemed the objection insurmountable, for he hesitates not to say, "Melius est ut pereat unus quam unitas." Nor would St. Leander have been stopped by it, who, on the suppression of the Arian heresy in Spain, dwells with such force on the necessity and sweetness of charity and unity, established, he says, "per prophetica vaticinia, per evangelica oracula, per apostolica documenta," adding, that you cannot possess them "nonnisi connexionem gentium prædicas, nonnisi unitatem populorum suspiras, nonnisi pacis et charitatis bona disseminas." You invoke, too, the diversity of regions, of races, of climate, and the national customs derived from high antiquity; but, says Gerbet, "every Church separated from Rome, and which holds to any fixed doctrines, contains only persons of one rite; every Church separated from Rome which admits of persons of many rites, does so only by its latitudinarianism and diversity of doctrine. The Catholic Church alone combines the immutability of doctrine with multiplicity of rites *." Some maintain that diversity of religions must conduce to the beauty of the spiritual world; but this is truly an appalling descent which must startle many, having for warning the use of the same argument by the Stoics, who pretended that, since God permits them, sins are necessary to the beauty of the universe. According to the theory of a certain section of protestors, the Church is like a serpent, that can be divided and yet left with life in its separated parts. "Strange it is, truly," observes a learned writer, "that it should be possible for any to persuade themselves that the life and powers which our Lord bestowed on his Church are capable, like those of some inferior animals, of being divided, so as to continue in two or more separate and even hostile parts, and not like those of man, their noblest natural type, absolutely indivisible, in such sort, that in every division of the body, if not lost altogether, which would be to suppose our Lord's promise false, they must ever remain, not in both parts, but in one or the other †."

* Esquisse de Rome Chrét. i. 134.
† C. Seager, Letter to a Friend.

Again; men who contradict themselves, as we remarked in the beginning, cannot be expected to agree with one another. Accordingly, the want of harmony and unity, even under their own banners, may be regarded as another signal directing all wanderers wearied with discord to the centre at the Catholic Church; for of Protestantism one may truly say, and that too, judging from what has just been seen, ought to be said without offending her,—

> "That all her studie was, and all her thought,
> How she might overthrow the things that concord wrought."

The Apostle of the nations expresses his fear lest, perhaps, when he comes to the Corinthians, he should not find them such as he would—lest, perhaps, contentions, envyings, animosities, dissensions, detractions, whisperings, swellings, seditions, be among them [*]. On the road we are now following, it will be found that such fears would soon be too well justified; for here, by a certain shadow and anticipation, seems displayed the penalty which Dante saw in hell on those

> —— "who while they lived did sow
> Scandal and schism, and therefore thus are rent [†]."

Here is manifested the truth of St. Augustin's words,—"Non est particeps divinæ charitatis qui est hostis unitatis." "The Councils of the Protestants," says Pierre Mathieu, "resemble the sphere, not in the perfection of its form, but in the diversity of its circles and movements, some to the east, others to the west [‡]." Chrysothemis thought that on some points it was impossible for men to disagree.

> —— τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οὐκ ἔχει λόγον
> δυοῖν ἐρίζειν, ἀλλ' ἐπισπεύδειν τὸ δρᾶν [§].

Such an impossibility does not exist on the road of the four winds, though all men cannot be alike satisfied with the experience; for, in truth, dispute and difference are by their consequences, as well as by their nature, evil. "Dissentientium inter se reprehensiones," indeed, says Cicero, "non sunt vituperandæ: maledicta contumeliæ, tum iracundiæ, contentiones, concertationesque in disputando pertinaces, indignæ mihi philosophiâ videri solent [||]." Yet, as a great French author observes, "it requires greater talent to please in remaining in order than in passing beyond all limits; it is less easy to regulate than to trouble the heart." Picus of Mirandula used to say, that the

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[*] 2 Cor. xii.

[†] 28.

[‡] Hist. de Hen. IV. lib. vii.

[§] Electra, 466.

[||] De Fin. i.

only useful disputations were those—"quæ pacato animo ad investigandam veritatem, privatim ac semotis arbitris, exercentur. Obesse autem illas quæ in propatulo fierent, ad ostentationem dumtaxat, aut captandam vulgi auram atque imperitorum applausum[*]." It cannot be a worthy preparation for the glory and felicity of another world to pass one's life in this one quarrelling, hurling defiance at every authority, launching forth coarse proud discourses to inflame minds with an indomitable resolution never to yield. Can he be the best guide, he, like another Polynyceus, that great quarreller, whose name alone is a reproach[†], who can howl against the Pope eight years together, dinners and suppers not excepted;

——————"Compact of jars,
Who could curse away a winter's night
Though standing naked on a mountain-top,
Where biting frost would never let grass grow,
And think it but a minute spent in sport?"

"The antipathy between the Protestant sects," says the historian of Henry IV., "is as great as that between ichneumons and crocodiles. They can only agree against the Pope, and it is a wonder if their assemblies ever break up without attacking him in some form or other. James I., finding the parsons all divided, pour composer ceste ministromachie, announced his resolution to banish the Jesuits and all monks from England[‡]." In this respect, no future Bossuet will be able to notice variations among the guides or followers of the reformed banner. Like the stunted trees on our western coast, they all lean one way; though, in regard to other questions, their best men will only have to remonstrate and protest in words, like those of the chorus to Teucer and Agamemnon, who are reviling each other,—

Εἴθ' ὑμῖν ἀμφοῖν νοῦς γένοιτο σωφρονεῖν·
τούτου γὰρ οὐδὲν σφῷν ἔχω λῷον φράσαι[§]·

or to say with Cicero, "Sit ista in Græcorum levitate perversitas, qui maledictis insectantur eos a quibus de veritate dissentiunt[||]; but let us exclude no one from our communion because they hold a different opinion on points which can be all disputed." These teachers, it is true, like weaving spiders, fail not in rich store of nice woven toils, while boasting of what some families, with such natural and becoming gratitude, call "the glorious principles of the Reformation;" but, when each offers his own tissue as the best, some, at least, will reply with Robert d'Arbri-

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[*] Joan F. in Vita Pici.
[†] Sept. c. T. 578.
[‡] Pierre Mathieu, Hist. de Hen. IV. lib. vi. et vii.
[§] Soph. Ajax, 1265.
[||] De Fin. ii. 25.

selle, “First, O schismatics, please to agree among yourselves, and then try to bring us over to your opinion*;” “for to part with my whole faith for your divided opinions of religion,” said the martyr Arthur Bell, “would be an exchange like that which your soldiers have obliged me to make, who have taken away my clothes that were whole, and given me nothing but rags and tatters in their place †.” Accordingly, here experience proves that the way is open; and so their contentions have been sufficient to awaken many to a sense of danger, who are now saying, in true Dantean words,—

“And we, departing, left them to that broil.”

Another pointing hand is stretched beside the path where the centre might be supposed farthest from the view of wanderers; since the very spirit of loving novelty that leads them from it will produce weariness, which finally can undeceive; for things sweet to taste prove in digestion sour. What new ingenious theories each year are proposed to solve

“The fresh dilemmas that circumstances yield!
O wonderful, wonderful, and most wonderful,
And yet again wonderful, and after that, out
Of all whooping!”

The unskilful will admire, but the judicious grieve.

“Mobile cum vento folium volat arbore raptum;
Sic mens instabilis semper ut aura volat.”

The mind that is not anchored on the rock of Peter is but a feather for each wind that blows. On questions of religion or morality it will not be like Hamlet, but mad north-north west; let the gust be from any of the four cardinal points, and its more or less unsafe lunacy will be the same. There is in all these heads something of the fitful blasts which give name to this exposed region; and yet they will sometimes long for halcyon days. Experience proves, say foresters, that the wild pine will be content with the worst sandiest ground, provided only the sand be fixed, not moveable. On this road of the four winds, it is only over ground desolated by blown sand that we have to pass. Here nothing grows; for in the lightest, dryest particles there is nothing that is not carried hither and thither as the storms bend.

How sweet it is, many will exclaim, to live amidst novelties, and to be able to despise all old-established things!

ὡς ἡδὺ καινοῖς πράγμασιν καὶ δεξιοῖς ὁμιλεῖν,
καὶ τῶν καθεστώτων νόμων ὑπερφρονεῖν δύνασθαι.

* Opus Quad. lib. i.

† Challoner.

This is what Phidippides says, after being in the school of the sophists[*]. The school of the reformers of the sixteenth century would have still more delighted him, as it continues even still to please minds of the same character. "You are gentlemen of brave mettle," says Gonzalo, "you would lift the moon out of her sphere, if she would continue in it five weeks without changing." Upon the road of the four winds, novelty alone is in request; and "it is as dangerous to be aged in any kind of course, as it is virtuous to be constant in any undertaking. There is scarce truth enough alive to make societies secure; but security enough to make fellowship accursed[†]." It is useless to refute errors which have no constant shape. Even whilst we speak new notes arise; while hatred only is unchanged. The English, who, as the Duke of York told the ambassador of Louis XIV., like novelty in nothing except in religion, and the French, who change every thing but their religion, can easily discover the force of that wonderful agent which makes the staid fickle, and the fickle staid. In fact, the principle of the reform involves the want and the necessity of continual change, its secret voice being ever like that of Deïanira,

—— "Properandum est, aliquidque novandum est."

"You change your mind," says Menelaus to Agamemnon:—

πλάγια γὰρ φρονεῖς, τὰ μὲν νῦν, τὰ δὲ πάλαι, τὰ δ' αὐτίκα [‡].

The reproach might be often heard upon this road, where men are carried about by mighty spirits, as they say themselves, so as never to know where they are standing. "Quorum officii refert," as Lanfranc says, "nova semper, et inaudita fingere; leviter, et injuriose prolata deterius exponere; bene et consulte dicta, quantum in ipsis est, in contrariam partem convertere[§]." These are they who, as Cicero says, will never follow any thing that other men begin; though what St. Leo says of Pagan Rome may be truly predicated of their nation—"et magnam sibi videbatur assumpsisse religionem, quia nullam respuebat falsitatem[||]." To take one's part that is out of favour these men are not inclined, knowing, as the fool says to Lear, "that an they cannot smile as the wind sits, they'll catch cold shortly;" but they do not the less esteem themselves as eminently solid and adamantine, while their humour is nothing but mutation; ay, and that from one bad thing to worse. "The mother idea of Protestantism," says a remarkable writer, "was that of grace destroying

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[*] Nubes, 1400.

[†] Measure for Measure.

[‡] Iph. in Aul. 332.

[§] Lanfranci Epist. 20.

[||] Serm. SS. Pet. et Paul.

free will; and its second idea has been the absolute belief in human reason. Such has been its passage from one excess to another [*]." But we shall be told to contrast the present quiet and consolidated state of things, where the four winds blow, with the distracted condition of some Catholic dominions. As far as regards an isolated phenomenon, the observation may be true; but what then? Is it the being carried about by every wind of doctrine that produces a peaceful and consolidated state? Is it faith that introduces a disturbing force? You will hardly be able to persuade those who have followed the preceding roads to be of that opinion. As we cannot here return to such ground, I would only say, that if it were true that there was no constancy in the English in days of yore, according to the saying of Simon de Montfort [†], it would only follow that, in later times, heresy, by opening a wide channel for the torrent, and causing thenceforth periodical changes in religion, had caused the restless element to be carried off in one direction, so as to leave the road even firmer for material things; though such wasteful prodigality of the best, sacrificing it for lesser good, cannot create permanent satisfaction. But, in fact, there is no ground for arguing from a mere unconnected transitory exception; and therefore, when confronted with the spirit that impels men on this path, the wisest will reply to its admirers, You are essentially the patrons of disorder, because you love novelty and innovation. Now, as to this spirit,

——— "I like it not,—
Old fashions please me best; I am not so nice
To change true rules for odd inventions."

"In you the antique and well-noted face
Of plain old form is much disfigured;
And, like a shifted wind unto a sail,
You make the course of thoughts to fetch about;
Startle and fright consideration,
Make sound opinion sick and truth suspected,
For putting on so new a fashion'd robe."

It is a true saying which Alanus de Insulis utters in the lines,—

"Sæpe viatorem nova non vetus orbita fallit:
Sic socius socium, non vetus, imo novus."

"It is in my nature," says Antonio de Guevara, "to be always the enemy of new opinions, and a friend to old books; for I am of opinion that the wisdom which is 'in antiquis' is with the

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[*] Études sur les Idées, &c. ii. 403.

[†] Chron. Will. de Reishanger.

ancient books rather than with grey hairs." In proportion as men love peace they will, like St. Thomas of Villanova, be the declared enemies of all kinds of novelties, even in discipline, for they will consider them as almost invariably the fruitful seed of troubles and dissensions; for which reason, we read that that great man would change nothing in the community which he governed. Betrayed by keeping company with moon-like men of strange inconstancy, others will return to the old road, changing to seek the centre which never changes, and that, like Stolberg, as he told the foolish king, because they detest change. "Shall these hands," they cry with Philip,—

"Play fast and loose with faith? so jest with heaven,
Make such inconstant children of ourselves,
As to unswear faith sworn?
——— Oh, holy sir,
My reverend father, let it not be so!"

Alanus de Insulis seems to have contemplated the issue which presents itself to them when he said,—

"In Boream zephyrum converti sæpe videmus,
Nomine mutato rursus et hunc in eum.
Non tamen admiror de tempore si varietur,
Cum sic cunctorum conditor ipse velit;
Sed miror miranda nimis, vaga corda virorum,
Cur totiens mutent se, prohibente Deo."

The road itself, by its atmospheric vicissitudes, thus at length awakens them. The effect doth operate another way; they bid farewell to those who still try to feed their love with words and errors, and they exclaim,—

"Go, wind, to wind, there turn and change together!"

Thenceforth, the conviction of the existence of an harmonious system of fixed laws in religion, as in the universe, acquires, in their minds, the certainty of a rational truth, and, as Schiller has said of man in general,—

"Amid ceaseless change, they will seek the
Unchanging pole."

Another negative signal, on this road, pointing to the centre, is supplied by the low, worldly, earthly character, of the new opinions, which, indeed, at an early period, became avowedly political rather than religious. Those whom they govern do not wear grasshoppers on their persons like the Athenians; but it

is clear that they think themselves sprung from the earth, the only thing about them unearthly being pride. Any interference of the Catholic Church with the earth on which they tread, though it were only by assigning names to a spiritual demarcation, of which they might know nothing, as they are engaged by oath to ignore it, inflames them to madness as an insufferable insolence. Then they must do something, and in the heat; they will do such things—what they are, yet no one knows; but they shall be the terrors of the earth. Shall it be a grand commission, an exact command, larded with many several sorts of reasons, importing the nation's health, that penal acts must instantly be framed? The state, and the whole body of the "well-named," look round on all sides for some counsellor, whose obedience in that instant does commend itself. Then is the moment for some to write and speak; then the professed Catholic, who lends his name to prove them of sound mind, shall be their's for ever. They say of him what Cornwall says of the Edmund who betrays his brother,—

> "Natures of such deep trust we shall much need."

Thus is all the nation troubled, so as to become an object of pity even to its enemies. And, indeed, if Rome were to claim a right of contesting with them in the struggles of ambition; if it pretended to rival the marvels of their industy, of their policy, of their power; if it attempted to have more colossal manufactories, more stupendous breweries, to construct more capacious docks, more noble ships, more prodigious tubes of communication between shore and shore, if it sought to speak as much, or to conduct with as much skill and success any human enterprize connected exclusively with the interests of the present life, there would be great reason to feel astonishment, and to stigmatise the measure as a most preposterous aggression, or a most extravagant folly; but to propose an opposition, in regard to things belonging solely to the spiritual and moral order, which they show in a thousand ways, do not concern them, which they neither love, nor respect, nor understand, can only exasperate a pride, which acts like the dog in the adage, neither feeding itself nor suffering those whose life depends upon such sustenance to feed. Protestantism, however glorified on earth, is characterized by that triple vanity which Alanus de Insulis so justly attributes to the world: "It has the vanity of mutability, the vanity of curiosity, and the vanity of falsehood *." Let us here especially take notice of the worldliness which is evidenced by its pride. If pride and disobedience had not existed in the world, the phenomena presented here

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* Summa de Arte Prædicatoria, c. 2.

would have never been witnessed; but the last road was a wide one:—

"Et graditur semper fastu comitata maligno:
Nascitur atra frutex ex ista radice frondens,
Et nemus umbrosum diro de semine surgit.
Cætera quæ dudum numeravimus agmina septem,
Inter mortales terrena stirpe creantur.
Ast vero monstrum, de quo nunc pagina fatur,
Principium sumpsit super alta cacumina cœli,
Angelicus princeps, et protus lucifer æthræ,
Ex aquilone suum dum sublimare tribunal,
Gestiit, et domino similem se fraude spopondit *."

"Heresy," as Freudenfeld observes, "is a common phenomenon in all ages, because it is the daughter of pride, and that pride is of all ages †." "Remark," says St. Anthony of Padua, "that the dispersion of tongues was effected at the tower of Babel, and that what pride dispersed humility collects again; for in pride is separation, in humility concord ‡."

——— "Let the axe
Strike at the root, the poison-tree will fall."

The Augustinians remark that, before the apostasy of Luther, the brethren of the Saxon congregation had withdrawn themselves from the obedience of the general of the order at Rome, so that it was as if from a bad root he sprung; and they deny that he was even a legitimate subject of their rule, since neither he nor that congregation obeyed the head of the order §. Calvin had been noted at Noyon for repeated trafficking with his benefices, selling several for ready money. His father, Calvin, died excommunicated for an abuse of trust. His eldest brother, Charles, after repeatedly drawing on himself the censures of the Church, refused to receive the sacraments at his death, and was buried under the gibbet ‖. It would be difficult to find a yoke that would suit some minds, however sublime may be their pretensions. "Who," exclaims Robert d'Arbriselle, "can be more justly called son of Belial, that is, he without a yoke, quam qui abjectis fidei orthodoxæ repagulis, sicut filius onagri se liberum natum putat, jugi impatiens, et constitutos à sanctis patribus terminos transiliens?" Sine jugo! what name more applicable to

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* S. Aldhelmi de Octo Vitiis.
† Tableau de l'Hist. Univ.
‡ Serm. in Die Pentecost.
§ Crusenius, Monast. Augustinianum, pars iii. c. 34, 35.
‖ Moët de la Forte-Maison, Antiquités de Noyon, 238.

those who meet us now[*]!—who identify themselves with the spirit of the age, and proclaim it to be irresistible? "If such liberty be sweet to the inexperienced, there are not wanting men who would gladly turn from it to seek a yoke, through a love of that obedience directing to Catholicity which Dom. de Rance defines as a renunciation of discernment by a plenitude of discernment[†]." For what a result is here! There is no respect of place, persons, or time in them. Again and again we assert, the new standard is that of pride: the war of false independence is in each man's heart who follows it,

——— "All the regions
Do smilingly revolt; and, who resist
Are only mock'd for valiant ignorance,
And perish constant fools."

Lofty words, indeed, may sound on all sides as suitable to those who seize their prey,—

"Beau escrie le loup
Qui sa proie luy rescout."

But thoughts are not celestial; for, as Robert d'Arbriselle says, "with these men, cœlum deorsum et terra sursum[‡]." What Tertullian said to the first Pagan persecutors might be repeated of these men, "Talibus dedicatoribus damnationis nostræ etiam gloriamur; qui enim illos scit intelligere potest nonnisi grande aliquod bonum ab illis damnari[§]." "Quam futilis," exclaims Robert d'Arbriselle, "quam terrena, quam humana est hæretica conversatio, sine gravitate, sine auctoritate, sine pondere, sine disciplina, fidei suæ per omnia congruens[‖]!" Mark the "well-named" in passing; and you will perceive with what justice can be applied to them, in reference to their opinions, the sacred words, "Vana locuti sunt unusquisque ad proximum suum[¶]." Thales died in consequence of his assisting at public games in the heat of the day. The gloom of this road does not exclude grave wrinkled men, who are resolved not to lose a scruple of any sport, pursuing pleasure with as much zeal as belongs to any class, and even trifling with a foolery that the vulgar youth would avoid and scorn; for young blood burns not with such excess as gravity's revolt to wantonness. Hey-day, what a sweep of vanity comes this way! The glory of the thinking people shows like madness. They make themselves fools to gratulate their senses; the ear, eye, taste, smell, all have en-

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[*] Rob. d'Arb. Opus Quadripartitum super Compescenda Hereticorum Petulantia.

[†] De la Sainteté et des dev. de la Vie Monast. 107.

[‡] Id. iv. [§] Apol. 5. [‖] Id. lib. iii. [¶] Ps. ii.

tertainment; nor must the charm cease when they depart. It is the gravest now who cannot travel ten miles without a buffoon at their side, in the form of a facetious journal, labouring to outjest injustice, which is the first thing they shout for at each stage. In general, the world and these new guides take in the main the same view of all subjects. An old French writer speaks of the Calvinists claiming "l'exercise libre de leur irreligion *." What are these denials but simply a want of the sacramental sense, that is, of religion itself? And, in point of fact, the general social results of their opinions could not be more accurately qualified, if we are to admit that sense, than as demoralization and profaneness.

John III., king of Sweden, said of the works of Luther and Calvin, after his unfortunate country had felt the consequences of their influence, "Stercora sunt;" and Theiner observes, that he could not have designated them in a manner more laconic and more just †. These common sewers, constructed by the architects of the new manners, form at length a kind of Curtian lake. Fierce with conceit, the "well-named" rush on, sink in the foul abyss, leave, as it were, their horse, their chivalry, their honour immersed in it, and save themselves as they can. But what abuses, you exclaim, what errors in the Catholic state! Ay, no doubt. The raven chides blackness. He'll be physician that should be the patient; we are required to watch

> "His petty lunes, his ebbs, his flows, as if
> The passage and whole carriage of the action
> Rode on his tide."

Short-armed ignorance takes this road, and tries to remove every indication of the rays that meet at lofty spiritual truth. "The sacraments," she says, "are signs; as if the day of Jewish unrealities were back." And, at the same time, she cherishes the art that can make vile things precious; in which she so excels, that one might suppose it was Oberon himself,

> "Who, with the juice of weeds had streak'd her eyes,
> And made her full of hateful fantasies."

Confronted with such opposition, some men will feel drawn towards those who are seen retiring from it in high contemplative mood,—

> ——— "Scorning to disclose
> The unutter'd mysteries which evermore
> Find an abiding refuge in their hearts."

When Father Possevin was at Upsal, in Sweden, one day an

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* Père Dupuy, L'Estat de l'Eglise du Périgord.

† La Suède et le S. Siège, ii. 7.

old peasant came to him. Having heard that some Catholic priests were arrived, he had secretly left the depth of the forest, where he had lived forty years in retreat, in order to remain faithful to the Catholic faith of his fathers. He threw himself at his feet, drew from his pocket the fragments of an old chaplet, kissed it, and told how the Lutheran ministers had often tried to drag it from him. He related, too, how he had lived, to the best of his power, like a Catholic ever since. The old man then made his confession, went to communion, and returned into his forest, which he thenceforth never left, excepting to receive the blessed sacrament from the Catholic missioners*. St. Bridget, in her revelations, describes the appearance of one who, in a grave habit, though resembling more a demon than a monk, proposed questions to our Lord, as an angry and impatient adversary; to whom Christ said, "O friend, I answer you, and yet not you, that the malice of your thoughts may be known to others; yet not you, I answer; for these things are not shown for your advantage, since you do not intend to change your pertinacity, but in life you hate the true life—'non quæris ut scias, sed ut sciatur malitia tua.' Nevertheless, others will hear and fly to that life†." "When there is an infected member in the body," says St. Anthony of Padua, "we see that all evil humours flow to it—there is an unnatural heat, and nothing serves to nourish it. So is it in the mystic body or congregation of the faithful; for, when any one is infected with malice, he not only becomes a sewer, to which whatever is not pure and good flows; but it happens also, that what is food for others becomes to him a cause of infirmity‡." The rich fund of bad humour with which nature seems to have endowed some races finds in the opinions that give title to the present road a wide and favourable field for its development, and an issue for its spiteful execrations. "I find," says Fuller, "that our famous poet, Chaucer, was fined in the Temple two shillings, for striking a Franciscan friar in Fleet Street; and it seems his hands ever after itched to be revenged, and have his pennyworth out of them, as appears in some of his writings." This merry writer might draw a similar inference from many works directed against Catholics, let their state or order be what it may. "All followers of vainglory, while they prefer themselves to all men," as St. Odo of Cluny observes, "reprehend some for want of sense, and others for want of merit; that is, they think that some know nothing, and that others do not live virtuously§." A modern historian says of a nation which embraced the false reform with most ardour, that "this great people, among many good and solid

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* Theiner, La Suède et le S. Siège.

† Rev. lib. v. int. xi

‡ Dom. iii. Quad. Serm.

§ Mor. in Job, lib. xxiii.

qualities, has one vice which spoils even these qualities. This immense, profound vice is pride. Cruel malady! and yet no less their principle of life, the explanation of their contradictions, the secret of their acts. With them, virtues and crimes are almost all pride. Even what is ridiculous in them springs from that source. This pride is prodigiously sensitive and painful; they suffer infinite tortures from it, and pride themselves in concealing these sufferings; yet they break out; and their language has two expressive words peculiarly its own—disappointment and mortification, from which the French derive them. They have transferred the ascetic term of mortification from that of the religion of God to the worship of self, and to the involuntary sufferings of vanity. This self-adoration, this interior worship of the creature for itself, is the sin of Satan. Therefore, with all their human virtues, with their gravity and exterior propriety, and biblical turn of mind, no nation is further from grace. From Milton to Byron, their fine and sombre literature is sceptical, Judaical, and anti-christian. In law, a legist has remarked, that 'the English are Jews, and the French Christians*.'" What he says in regard to law, a theologian would say in relation to faith. The American Indians express the same distinction, in their manner, saying, "that the Christ was crucified by the English in London, and that Pontius Pilate was an officer in the English army."

There may be malice in such passages, which are cited here unwillingly as some of the painful incidents belonging to this hateful road; but the truth needs no exaggeration to be noticed, and it would be a false love that would pass it by in silence.

Cardan, accounting for the schism under Henry VIII., says, in his quaint style, "that the English are under the influence of Aries, and that the Jews owe their crimes to the same sign; which accounts," he adds, "for the similarity between Great Britain and Judæa."

Lost in the labyrinth of disdain, the gentle spirit of moving words can no way change those who love this road to a milder form. If others, men half in heaven, expect a gentle answer from them, they will only hear such reply as, "I am not bound to please thee with my answer. The most hateful epithets applied by enemies to thee shall be, now and for ever," they add, "among my household words." Moreover, every wanderer will, sooner or later, see convincing proof that,

——— "Mammon leads them on—
Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
From heaven."

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* Houard, Preface des anciennes Lois des François conservées dans les Coutumes Anglaises de Littleton.

"Traffic's thy god; and thy god wears every form," might another Apemantus say. "Pilate feared Cæsar; so, in the end, he resolved," says Antonio Guevara, "that Christ should rather lose his life, than he would lose the chief-justiceship of Jurie*."

Such is the spirit of the "well-named." Wherever their reform prevails, the worship which Alanus Magnus styles nummulatria is soon the popular and state religion—"per quam," as he observes, "in animis hominum deificatur pecunia; nummo divinæ venerationis exhibetur authoritas." There, as he observes, "ubi nummus loquitur, Tulliani eloquii tuba raucescit; ubi nummus commilitat, Hectoreæ militiæ fulgura conticescunt. Jam non Cæsar, sed nummus est omnia—nummus Patriarcha est—nummus mundum regit, imperat universis†." "Hæreticus," says St. Augustin, "est, qui alicujus temporalis commodi et maximè gloriæ principatusque sui gratia falsas ac novas opiniones vel gignit vel sequitur‡." One who knew it well says, that if genuine Protestantism would pardon Anglican bishops their temporalities, "she might go jagged in as many cuts and slashes as she pleased for them." Accordingly, to screen their temporalities, we see how they now establish slashes, and how, politically, their power waxes stronger every day. The interests of the world, when those of the individual are not apparent, are seen to sway the "well-named," more or less, in every thing. "This same Cranmer," says Norfolk, "is a worthy fellow, and hath ta'en much pains in the king's business." "I have the interests of my Church," says Southey's Doctor, "zealously at heart, because I believe them to be essentially and inseparably connected with those of the commonwealth§." So we have been lately told that the English ambassador "promised to exert his influence to propagate the Gospel in Spain, as he considered its agent's views extremely well calculated to operate beneficially on the political and moral state of the country." The four winds are useful for the purpose of concluding commercial treaties; and every protesting enthusiast is sure of favour from the Minister of Foreign Affairs. But will it not strike some, that each argument, however plausibly enforced on this head, would have suited well those of whom the Prophet Isaiah said, "We have placed our hope in a lie; we have been protected by it." "We are persuaded," say the "well-named," "that our national glory is interested in the success of these missioners abroad, in the permanence of these establishments at home. As for the Catholic, he is dangerous to the state, a pernicious tempter; and, as Ulysses said of his adversary, he tries to persuade me,—

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* The Myst. of Mt. Calv.

† De Planctu Naturæ.

‡ De Utilit. Credend.

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'Ἀλλ' ἐμὸν οὔποτε θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἔπειθον.
Ὣς οὐδὲν γλύκιον ἧς πατρίδος οὐδὲ τοκήων
Γίνεται——*."

"We are born," they say, "what we are. Each man should remain in the religion in which he has been born." St. Augustin heard similar apologies. "Sed quid dicam. Fratres?" he replied; "non eis irascamur; sed pro eis oremus, ut det eis Dominus intellectum, quia forte hoc nati sunt. Quid est, hoc nati sunt? Hoc acceperunt à parentibus suis quod tenent. Præponunt genus veritati. Fiant quod non sunt, ut possint servare quod sunt, hoc est, fiant Catholici, ut possint servare quod homines sunt. Ut, non in illis pereat Dei creatura, accedat Dei gratia†." What sharp-sighted glances! what energy on all sides! But, where temporal interest of some kind does not speak, it is for sleeping men that signals seem to line the way. It is in Shakspeare that we read,—

"For sleeping England long time have I watch'd."

Alas! how long has she slept thus? "There is a sleep," says Alanus de Insulis, "quando dormit ratio, et sensualitas exorbitat‡."

Along this road, where interest or vanity does not excite men to exertion in regard to religious doctrines, there is a universal lethargy.

"What a strange drowsiness possesses them!"

The answer is not sufficient, that it is the quality of the climate. Strangers soon perceive that they are in a land where, to speak plain truth in few words, the spirit of the world reigns. Than by such experience, there cannot be a plainer way open to the Catholic Church; for her children do not resemble such proficients. As Alanus says,—

"Illa docet cœleste sequi, vitare caducum,
Vivere lege poli, sursum suspendere mentem,
Fastidire solum, cœlum conscendere mente,
Corporis insultus frenare, refellere luxus
Carnis, et illicitos rationi subdere motus§."

In fine, this worldliness of Protestantism pierces through its affectation of simplicity; for the spirit of the world has no sense of beauty as reflected in creation—no form, no loveliness. "Simplici corde meo sermones mei," says the arrogant friend of Job. "For simplicity of speech," says the Abbot Odo, commenting

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* ix. 33.

† S. Augustin Serm. 139, ad popul.

‡ Sum. de Arte Præd. 48.

§ Enclycopæd. lib. vii. c. 6.

the text, "is of such virtue, that the arrogant, who have it not, are solicitous to affirm that they have it, that they may be heard more readily; and they declare that they speak with pure simplicity, fearing lest the malice of their duplicity should be detected*." "The well-named" pretend to possess simplicity of character; but the lines of Alanus apply to them:—

> "Plus aloes quam mellis habent in pectore tales
> Quos sanctis similes simplicitate putes."

They love simplicity, they say, in all things. But the simplicity which God loves, which the organization of nature, developing multiplicity out of unity, indicates in all creation, is not that which sophists in their pride propose. They invoke the poverty of desolation—the formless, monotonous reign of matter unarranged, when chaos had not felt the movement of the Spirit of God—a state of things where nothing but their own image may appear for human worship:—

> "Sacrorum sic lapsus honor, sic sancta recessit
> Relligio; patrum sic disciplina sepulta est.
> Cum vero superum cessat custodia, Larvæ
> Omnia subvertunt; nec habent mortalia pacem,
> Regna ferunt nostri nulla emolumenta laboris.
> Dispenduntur opes in mutua damna: per urbes
> Seditio regnat; per corda humana simultas
> Pullulat, et sumit vires animosa libido.
> Hinc tot bellorum strepitus†."

Let errors congenial to human pride be once established, and then will be seen verified how the world will love its own.

> "Life, from the nice distinction, takes its hue;
> And best those judges who decide like you!
> On worth like theirs shall every bliss attend:
> The world their fav'rite, and the world their friend."

Reason and faith, philosophy and theology, will then be overmatched by votes, and a county meeting attended by a dozen lords, sufficient for all purposes. It would be difficult to cite an epoch when any new error has arisen, or when any ancient error has been revived, to afflict the Catholic Church, without the approval and concurrence of men who judge with worldly eyes of every thing. At the commencement, heresy found no warmer welcome than in some of those castles where men lived like Reynard the Fox, at Malepardus, "which," says the old history that is intended to represent their manners, "was his chief

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* Mor. in Job, lib. xxiii.

† Bapt. Mant. de Sacris Diebus Feb.

house, being full of many intricate and curious rooms, which labyrinth-wise he could pass through when either his danger, or the benefit of any prey, required the same." During the crusade in the south of France, on the territory of Albi, siege was laid to the Castle of Termes, which crowned an almost inaccessible rock. Raymond de Termes, of one of the oldest families in the country, was its Seigneur. Full of confidence in the invincible site of his castle, he had been in habits of making war on all the world, according to his caprice. In his sallies, he did not spare the lands even of his own sovereign, the Vicomte de Béziers. He had long taken precautions against a siege, having enrolled soldiers, filled his magazines, and prepared all kinds of defence. He was so attached to heresy, that mass had not been said in the chapel of the castle for thirty years. It was not till after a long siege, and many vicissitudes, that his strong-hold was taken*. Cæsar of Heisterbach relates another instance: "A few years ago," he says, "under the learned Bishop Bertram, the Waldensian heresy came to Metz, being professed by certain strangers from Montpellier; and when asked by the clergy, Who had sent them to preach to the people, as no one should preach without being sent, they replied, 'The Spirit.' The bishop could not restrain them by force, on account of some men in power of the city, who cherished them through hatred of the bishop, whom they detested, from his having ejected from the cemetery of the church the body of one of their relations who was a usurer†." After the year 1412, John Huss was sustained by all the nobility of Bohemia, and made Director of the Queen. He was excited, perhaps in an underhand manner, by the King Wenceslas, as Wycliffe had been by Edward III. and Richard II., the brother-in-law of Wenceslas. Both Huss and Wycliffe were the men of the nobles. It was the knights who armed the peasants to avenge the former by that terrible war of the Hussites‡. When Huss entered Constance, he was accompanied by several nobles of Bohemia and Moravia, who were his friends and followers§. Luther was the associate of princes and barons. The lieutenants of Luther were German knights. When obliged to seek an asylum, he preferred the haughty ramparts of the Castle of Wartbourg to the cottages of the poor who had sheltered the Catholic missioners as the first apostles. In France, at one time, a great part of the nobility, and many of the highest of the middle class, had embraced the reform, while the mass of the people, with the clergy at their head, remained

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* Hurter, Gesch. Inn. III. lib. xv.

† Lib. v. c. 20.

‡ Michelet, Hist. de France, iv. 326.

§ Gab. Bucelinus, Chronologia Constantiensis.

faithful*. When Queen Elizabeth, in 1562, sent 6000 English troops to join the Calvinist rebels in France, and 140,000 gold crowns to promote their cause; or when Henry IV. came to an understanding with the Moors in Spain, promising them the aid of 4000 men if they would rise against the Spanish Government†, no one could doubt for which side the spirit of the world had pronounced. On all these occasions there was but the repetition of a phenomenon which had been remarked from the beginning of Christianity. Sidonius Apollinaris says of the Gothic king, "More terrible to Christian laws than to the Roman walls, the mere mention of the name Catholic so exasperates his breast and tongue, that you might doubt whether he is most chief of his nation or of his sect—tantum ori, tantum pectori suo, Catholici mentio nominis acet, ut ambigas amplius ne suæ gentis an suæ sectæ teneat principatum‡." Indeed, if the subtle prince of this world had been dethroned in the minds of men, the poet's wish would be fulfilled:—

——"And falsehood's trade
Would be as hateful and unprofitable
As that of truth is now."

Another characteristic, which cannot create exceptionless attraction, is the presumptuous spirit with which heresy offers and extends itself, thereby supplying a signal to point at the centre, where is found the secret humility surrounding truth. The deluded disciples of the heretical sorcerer, Eudo de Stell, obtained great names from him. One was called Wisdom, another Knowledge, another Judgment, and so on, though not one of them had any sound sense or doctrine§. It is not the fault of the atmosphere on this road of the four winds, if men or nations think poorly of themselves, and estimate their individual or national wisdom below its value. Here dull, brainless boasters learn the lesson which Milton ascribes to the revolted spirits,—

"How few sometimes may know when thousands err!"

You say, even in your prayers, that you are the select, the eminently pure and enlightened. Wonder not if some should address you in the words of Ulysses:—

'Αλλὰ μάλ' ὑβρίζεις καί τοι νόος ἐστὶν ἀπηνής·
Καί πού τις δοκέεις μέγας ἔμμεναι, ἠδὲ κραταιὸς,
Οὕνεκα πὰρ παύροισι καὶ οὐκ ἀγαθοῖσιν ὁμιλεῖς ||.

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* Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Mme. de Maint. iii. 4.

† Id. i. 59.

‡ vii. 6.

§ Guil. Neub. Rer. Ang. lib. i. 19.

|| xviii. 380.

But mark how nearly inevitable was the progress from the road of pride to this spacious tract; for what attribute of arrogance does not find its natural development here? Alanus de Insulis represents Nature distinguishing the qualities of the proud, and saying, "Suos actus specificare gaudentes, in multitudine singulares, in generalitate speciales, in universalitate adversi, in unitate diversi, omnifariam esse laborant *." What is wanting to complete the picture of heresy? Shall we have our religious meeting in the city alone and separate? asks a timid waverer, in the old play,—

μόνοι δὲ πόλεως —— χορεύσομεν ;

he is soon re-assured. Yes, certainly, is the reply :—

μόνοι γὰρ εὖ φρονοῦμεν, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι κακῶς †.

Euripides might be supposed to have drawn from recent observations on this road. Methinks some fairy, without irreverence, might demand here in this forest,—

"Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!"

Here, it is men who practice feats of jumping in search of divine grace; there, it is effigies of popes and cardinals, carried along with shouts of derision, and then committed to the flames. "I have seen things," said the Maréchal de Villars, speaking of the Calvinists in the Cévennes, "which I should never have credited, if they had not passed before my eyes. I have seen a whole town, of which all the matrons and young girls, without exception, seemed possessed by the demon; they trembled and prophesied in the streets, saying that the Holy Ghost spake by their mouths ‡." The moderate and cautious betray the same assurance of their own personal infallibility. Goethe describing the Pope at the altar, on the day of All Souls, says that he was seized with a strange longing desire that the head of the Church might open his golden mouth, and speaking with rapture of the bliss of the happy souls, set all present too in a rapture, but that, as he only saw him moving in silence, just like a common parish priest, then the original sin of Protestantism revived within him; for, "most assuredly," he concludes, probably from the fact of his being one of the congregation, "Christ himself, on such an occasion, would have spoken;" therefore he nudged his companion to come out from the chapel into the freer air of the vaulted hall. He was wiser than pope and cardinals, and all

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* De Planctu Naturæ. † Eur. Bacch. 195.

‡ Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Mme. de Maint. iv. 4.

the rest present; or, rather, as he says, he felt that, by their silence, and by their moving backwards and forwards before the altar, they were crucifying Christ afresh, so he would not remain under the same roof with them. Thus rationalism and fanaticism are found to play the same part. But, with respect to the latter, men who lay claim to certainty, from the fancy of a personal and divine communication, in contradiction with the Catholic rule of faith, cannot prevent some from remarking, that not even all to whom God has spoken were holy and right in their judgment; for, as Rupertus observes, "he spoke to Cain, and he spoke to Balaam [*]." Men will turn from such boasters to dwell with pleasure on the Catholic lesson conveyed in the legend of the hermit who, when the devil appeared transformed into an angel of light, and said to him, "I am Gabriel, why do you close your eyes? I am sent to you;" replied to him, "Look if it be not to some one else that you are sent, for I am not worthy to receive an angel's visit;" whereupon the demon vanished [†]. "The heretics," says St. Odo of Cluny, "love to meet in their clandestine conventicles, ut errori suo reverentiam quam ex ratione non valent præbeant ex occultatione [‡]." Job has multiplied words without science, says Heliu, and thus, observes St. Odo, "the most loquacious reprover accuses him of loquacity; but this is characteristic of the arrogant, to believe the many things which they utter to be few, and the few words replied to them to be very many [§]."

In the prophecy of Christ's flock, we read, "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, thou art my people; and they shall say, the Lord is my God [||]." "Et erit in die illâ, dicit Dominus exercituum, disperdam nomina idolorum de terra, et non memorabuntur ultra [¶]." In Catholicism we see accomplished these divine promises; but you say, that for eight hundred years and more idols were remembered by the people who said the Lord was their God. You say the Church has erred, and has only been preserved in our conventicle. "Hanc sacrilegam vanitatem," adds Lanfranc, "evertit evangelica veritas, et prophetarum atque sanctorum patrum non violanda auctoritas [**]." When we hear the charge of ignorance produced against Catholics by the "well-named," one may be reminded of the answer of Plistonax to the Athenian orator, who had treated the Spartans as ignorant: "You are right," he replied; "we alone have learned no evil from you."

[*] De Vict. Verb. Dei, v. 25.

[†] De Vita SS. Patrum, c. 15.

[‡] Mor. in Job, xx.

[§] Mor. in Job, xxvi.

[||] Zach. xiii. 9.

[¶] Zach. xiii. 2.

[**] D. Lanfranci, Liber de Corpore et Sang. Domini.

One may be tempted, also, when we hear their theologic patriotism proclaimed, to ask in the words of Imogen,—

"Hath Britain all the sun that shines? Day and night,
Are they not but in Britain? —— Pr'ythee, think
There's livers out of Britain."

And, after all, what can be more significative than to find that you, a people, too proud to imitate even foreign virtues, will sell yourselves to foreign vices, and help to dethrone all princes who seek to curb them. The Catholic religion, you say, is degrading to a nation! Your Prime Minister affirms that "it confines the intellect and enslaves the soul*."

"Oh, if you but knew how you the purpose cherish,
Whiles thus you mock it! how, in stripping it,
You more invest it! Ebbing men, indeed,
Most often do so in their wrath."

To Berengarius, Lanfranc says, "Tui moris est alios deprimere, te efferre, te jactare, de te magna sentire." He has the simplicity to propose to him the example of David, "qui humiliter vixit, humiliter docuit, pugnans pro ecclesia, assumens scutum fidei et gladium Spiritûs quod est verbum Dei †." But all men of this character have an armour of their own, and feel sufficiently secure without borrowing aught from David. "The heretics," says St. Odo of Cluny, "as if sure of sanctity, suppose that in merit of life they surpass all other men. Porro ad me dictum est verbum absconditum, they say, pretending that they hear a hidden word, in order to impress the minds of their hearers with a certain reverence for their preaching ‡." Nevertheless, the voice of antiquity will sometimes make itself be heard; as, when St. Bruno says, "We must draw only from the fountains of Israel, that is of the Church—nihil enim proficeret bene facere, si superbiendo discederetis ab ecclesiæ collectione, juxta quod apostolus testatur; si tradidero corpus meum ita ut ardeam, charitatem autem non habeam, nihil mihi prodest. Tunc quidem discederetis ab ecclesia, si vos solos sanctos esse judicantes, illos de ecclesia judicaretis esse solummodo peccatores et indignos conversatione vestra; et sic charitatem erga eos non haberetis §." It is significative, also, to watch the turns that proud self-sufficiency will devise to manifest its disdain of Catholics. Grassion, a Huguenot, and cruel general, who was

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* Letter of Lord John Russell, 1850.

† Lib. de Corp. et Sang. Dom.

‡ Mor. in Job, lib. v.

§ Id. in Ps. lxviii.

sent into Normandy to put down the insurrection of the nupieds, used to say, "If I believed in the real presence, I would pass my whole life in a church, prostrate with my face to the ground; and I cannot persuade myself that Catholics believe what they say they believe respecting this mystery, seeing how little respect they show towards it in the church *." Thus the Protestor knows far better than Catholics how Catholicism should be practised. The calm observer is prompted to ask, Is there no man else in the world but he alone?

οὐκ ἆρ' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄνδρες εἰσὶ πλὴν ὅδε †;

or in the words of Job, "Are you then men alone, and shall wisdom die with you? I, also, have a heart as well as you; for who is ignorant of these things which you know?"

εἴ τοι νομίζεις κτῆμα τὴν αὐθαδίαν
εἶναί τι τοῦ νοῦ χωρὶς, οὐκ ὀρθῶς φρονεῖς ‡.

But here a sort of miracle confronts us; for what more prodigious wonder than to find the wise fearing the ignorant, those girt, as they proclaim, with the panoply of truth, starting like deer before the unarmed children of error? But Protestantism can explain away all miracles. It knows of no dilemmas for itself; so it is ever announcing the imminent peril in which knowledge is placed if it listens to ignorance, and manifesting its apprehensions of a faith that it pronounces to be a superstition fallen. And, in truth, its fears are grounded; for, as old Plato says, "men can only renounce truth in spite of themselves, either by surprise, or enchantment, or violence, that is, through forgetfulness or persuasion, through the hope of pleasure or the fear of evil, by grief and pain which act as compulsion §." The "well-named" seem instinctively conscious that all roads lead to Rome. Hence their secret and continual misgivings, seeming to choose always for chief councillor some one whom our ancestors, in mirthful mood, would style a St. Christopher of Palm Sunday. Not an ox, as to Cn. Domitius, but an ass, seems ever speaking to them, and saying, "Cave tibi, Roma." If heresy, in every age, be still a howling monster, one may say of it, with no less justice, in the words of him who discovered the appetites of Caliban, "that it is also a very shallow monster, a very weak monster, a most poor credulous monster." To circumvent and escape, by destroying the Holy See, is indeed the object of its

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* Floquet, Hist. du Parl. de Normandie.
† Soph. Ajax, 1239.
‡ Œd. Tyr. 550.
§ De Repub. iii.

representatives, saying, like the Satan of Milton, at each new folly that is published,—

> "O fair foundation laid, whereon to build
> Their ruin!"

Though even here their hopes are so mixed up with mistrust, that one cannot speak a word but it straight startles them. Some deep suspicion prompts them to ask each moment, like the king at the proposed offering,—

> "Have you heard the argument? Is there
> No offence in't?"

As for men at all inclining to the views of Christian antiquity within their own camp, there is but one opinion respecting them: "They think too much; such men are dangerous." The well-named cannot hide from observation that they fear as much as they hate Catholicism. "Tremueruntque Philistii, dicentes, Venit Deus in castra*;" or, like those who opposed the rebuilding of the temple, they demand, "Quis dedit vobis consilium ut muros hos instauraretis et domum hanc ædificaretis†?"

The music that is heard upon this road might lead one to suppose that it passed through Lincoln marshes, where the inhabitants of mud and rushes know but one chorus:—

> "Et veterem in limo ranæ cecinere querelam‡."

Yet, to scrutinise the faithful fold, these men, so monotonous, traverse earth like him who made the tour of Eden, saying to himself,—

> "But first, with narrow search, I must walk round
> This garden, and no corner leave unspied."

Not, indeed, with his daring do they perambulate it; for some appear, in all their circling wiles, to fear a fate like that of Pentheus, when he went to explore the rites of Bacchus. With that fate their classic studies render them familiar, so that one cannot greatly wonder at their fear, if they have any idea that they may themselves experience such an end as the messenger in the Bacchæ describes. The scene then was in the wilderness of woods like those around us now. "We mounted," he says, "the heights of Cithæron, following our stranger guide, and entered a wood, taking care to make no noise with our steps, in order that we might see without being ourselves seen. It was a valley, surrounded with steep rocks, watered with many springs, and shaded with firs, where the mad worshippers assembled.

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* Lib. Reg. iv. 7.

† Esd. v.

‡ Georg. i.

The wretched Pentheus, not being able to see the women, said, 'O stranger, from this spot I cannot perceive the lascivious dance; but, if we gain some height, or climb up a tree, I shall be able to witness the shameful spectacle.' Then, placed upon the curved tree, which regained the perpendicular instantly on receiving his weight, he was raised into the air, and exposed to the insane troop, rather than made a spectator, when the stranger vanished, and a voice was heard, doubtless that of Bacchus, 'Dear companions, here is the traitor who mocks our orgies—take vengeance.' A sacred fire burst forth—every leaf in the forest was stilled. Then the worshippers rushed round to wreak their vengeance on the wretch, and prevent him from revealing their mysteries. His mother was the first amongst them. 'Oh, my mother,' he exclaimed, 'I am thy son Pentheus, take pity on me!' But she, with foaming lips, and wild distracted eyes, deaf to the voice of nature, devoted to the god who possessed her, seized him, and, aided by the rest, tore him limb from limb. The groans of dying Pentheus resounded through the forest; his limbs were scattered on the rocks; his head, raised upon the thyrsis, is borne along by his raging mother, as if it were that of a lion. Thus did he put on the disguise of a Bacchanal only to perish by his mother's hands, following the god who guided him to his destruction." Such is the fable, which seems to haunt the imagination of those who follow the present road, and which might account for the kind of dread that seizes on them whenever they are tempted to satisfy their curiosity with respect to Catholicism; they fear, in fact, their own impostures; and fears make devils cherubims—they never see truly. But, oh, if laying aside such arts, they would pierce into this forest of life in quest of the Church, their true mother, she would not treat any of them as they seem to expect! Let them not start; her actions shall be holy as her spells are pure.

"Fear not her truth: the moral of her wit
Is—plain, and true,—there's all the reach of it."

She might exult, indeed, like Agave, and say, "I have caught this young lion without nets—our god is a skilful hunter;" but Rome, with her seven hills, would not prove another Cithæron, nor would the daughter of Cadmus be found there to mock the inquisitive stranger. The Church would win them to her bosom. She has mysteries to vivify, not to kill, her enemies; as a French voice proclaimed to senators, who too had their mistrusts, "To pray for them is her vengeance; and to survive them is her victory."

But if, through dissatisfaction at the doctrinal and psychological results, men can find an issue from Protestantism to

Catholicity, the historical and moral developments of the former are no less significative and efficient in supplying directions. Let us proceed onwards towards these avenues, observing first what may be styled the signal by history. Yes, truly, the origin and historic results which are presented here are not calculated to detain observing and reflecting men upon the present road, along which,—

> —— "Suddenly a multitude,
> The steep already turning from behind,
> Rush on with fury, and like random rout[*]."

It is true great pains are taken to twist round this signal, and to represent the revolution of the sixteenth century in a favourable light. Anglicanism, like the Nile, in the time of Phaëton, seeks to conceal its source when the fire of charity is kindled upon the earth. Its admirer now says with Ulysses,—

> "Plura quidem feci, quam quæ comprendere dictis
> In promptu mihi sit[†]."

He finds trophies of his glory every where ; or, if much pressed, he replies, like Hercules, when taxed with killing his children, "I do not remember having done any such thing."

> *οὐ γάρ τι Βακχεύσας γε μέμνημαι φρένας*[‡].

The answer is judicious :—

> "Ille nihil contra : neque enim defendere verbis
> Talia facta potest[§]."

"If I have done it," says heresy, "it was necessity, the force of circumstances, the age that did it." As Agamemnon argues,—

> —— *ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ αἴτιός εἰμι,*
> *ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς καὶ Μοῖρα καὶ ἠεροφοῖτις Ἐριννύς*[‖].

Now, undoubtedly, it may be true that there was a spirit working in the age which caused the revolution, and impelled men to act thus ; but it does not diminish the unsatisfactory result of such knowledge, to find also from history proof that a real desire of reform was not that spirit ; that the change was not produced by the abuses which existed at the time—that, "so far from ascribing to abuses the rise and growth of the new opinions, we must feel convinced," as Balmes says, "that all the legal reforms imaginable, and all possible condescension of the ecclesiastical authority, would not have prevented the rise of Pro-

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[*] Purg. 18.

[†] Met. xiii.

[‡] Herc. Furens, 1122.

[§] Met. xii.

[‖] xix. 85.

testantism*. Was it," he asks, "the preaching of indulgences, or the enormity of abuses, that caused heresy in the primitive Church? No; there has always been resistance to the authority of the Church; and, if Protestantism had not broken out in the sixteenth century, we should now have to solve this problem, and ask, how it came to pass that there was no heresy in the sixteenth century?" Equally with its own, Protestantism would conceal the origin and historical results of Catholicism. The prediction would have been a true prophecy, if the glorious generations that followed holy truth through the early and middle ages had said with poets,—

——— "Let these who come
Behind, for whom our stedfast will has bought
A calm inheritance, a glorious doom,
Insult with careless tread our unrespected tomb.
Our many thoughts and deeds, our life and love,
Our happiness, and all that we have been,
Immortally must live, and burn, and move
When we shall be no more.
——— But what we have done
None shall dare vouch, though it be truly known;
That record shall remain, when they must pass
Who built their pride on its oblivion."

No greatness, no innocence has escaped the censure and the calumnies of those who advocated heresy. In France, the Huguenots, with the Admiral Coligny at the head of them, endeavoured to cast a stain on the morals of Pius V., though the impostor who lent himself to their odious project was discovered. In England, the same men who received James I. as a man unparalleled, saying, that the sun could see nothing greater in its course—that he was to shame past ages, to honour and glorify the present, and to be the astonishment of futurity,—had nothing but words of derision and hatred for all the worthies of ancient European, and even African renown. Protestantism, in this respect, might truly say,—

"Inferior virtute, meas divertor ad artes."

Though, like its martyrologist, it had reason to use a certain caution when making use of its own impostures; as when Parson Prick recited a libel out of Fox's book, affirming that Greenwood was killed by the hand of God, whereas he was present at the sermon, and thereupon brought his action against the parson†. The road of the four winds has seen among its followers historians, of whom we might truly say, in the words of

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* i. c. 2.

† Forsyth. Hortensius, 397.

Robert d'Arbriselle, "that they never uttered or penned inaccuracies, excepting when they spoke or wrote*." Fox, qui nunquam mendax est, nisi cum loquitur, is by no means a solitary instance, as some, even of his company, have of late been at the pains to demonstrate. "In France," says Milton, "a more severe monarchy than ours, the Protestants carry the name of the best subjects the king has." From such a claw we may judge of the lion. Much might be produced on this head, but we need not notice it—nobis satis erit in his coarguisse dira mendacia. But "how should there be truth in histories written by heretics," said the Emperor Charles V., who, too, like his greater namesake, was an "old Christian," "when they have extinguished the light of truth in themselves?" Accordingly, observe what a false image of the Catholic religion is present to the mind of its adversaries, who seem incapable of conceiving the possibility of its being true. "Evellam ex animis hominum," each Catholic apologist might say with Cicero, "tantam opinionem? tam penitus insitam? tam vetustam? Non est nostri ingenii: vestri auxilii est, judices, hujus innocentiæ sic in hac calamitosa fama, quasi in aliqua perniciosissima flamma atque in communi incendio subvenire†." It is Alanus de Insulis who says,—

"Non possum prohibere canem, quin latret ubique,
Nec queo mendaci claudere labra viro."

Nevertheless, sufficient truth will pierce through even the most distorted representations of past events, to render it very difficult for one who esteems them to rise with satisfaction from studying the origin and successive developments of the religious opinions that were broached, against authority, from the apostolic days till the sixteenth century. "When the dragon," says Rupertus, "found that the Roman Emperors renounced idolatry, and became subject to Christ, he changed his mode of persecution. How then did he proceed to persecute the Church? Misit aquam de ore suo tanquam flumen; that is, he emitted heretical doctrines, that they might carry away faith as if with a torrent. Then from the mouth of the serpent issued the flood of the Arian heresy, which gradually overflowed the earth; with that flood of eloquence and loquacity turning to abuse the Scriptures, and hurling against the Church so many rocks of offence and persecution‡." In the old symbolic language of the Church, the first ages are represented by a white horse carrying a man armed with a bow, and wearing a crown to signify purity and the Christian doctrine; but the latter ages

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* Op. Quadripartit. † Pro Cluentio.
‡ De Vict. Verbi Dei, lib. xiii. 6.

are represented by a bay horse carrying a man with a sword, to signify heresies and wars. Luther and Calvin might have adopted a classical emblem in which no one could detect a trace of Popery. They might have borne the same device as that of Capaneus—a naked man carrying a torch, with these words—*πρήσω πόλιν*, "I will burn the city*." Moreover, the sad necessity and consequences of self-defence must not be forgotten in the account; for men will not submit to have their country overthrown, with all that they venerate, and look on quiescent. The reaction then, as men now say, was undoubtedly pregnant with evil for the world. "Yet," as St. Augustin observes, "if the multitude had not their heart in their eyes, instead of in the heart, they would discover far more terrible results than all of these together. Si sanguis exit de carne mortali, quisquis aspicit exhorrescit. Si à pace Christi præcisæ animæ in hæresis sacrilegio moriuntur quia non videtur, non plangitur." How many must have perished lying under the just and fearful ban which was imposed to save them! It would be tedious to seek to distinguish in what particular age were sown the tares of many a blighting heresy which late and early grew among the wheat in Arian, Manichæan, or in Luther's days.

> "Væ quibus hæc pellex gemmato præbuit auro
> Toxica! Væ populis, quos illa afflaverit ore!
> Væ quibus inque aures fatali murmure cantrix
> Verba susurravit! nam nunc quoque subdola vultus
> In varios, inque ora migrat; pestemque per urbes
> Incedens, lethumque vehit mortalibus ægris†."

Perhaps the first unsatisfactory impression of an historic kind that steals upon the mind while pursuing this track will arise from beholding evidence that all these great changes, as has been already said in passing, were uncalled for. "I think," says Cicero, "that the ancient hearers of Plato, Speusippus, Aristotle, Xenocrates, and their disciples, had constituted such a discipline, that there was no reason for Zeno, after hearing Polemo, to protest against him and his predecessors." There was no reason to call for such a new discipline. What consistency can you find in these opinions, substituted for the ancient wisdom? You confound all things: you set up a human for a divine authority. O magnam vim ingenii, causamque justam, cur nova exsisteret disciplina‡!" "After hearing St. Gregory, St. Thomas, Innocent III., I too think," will our wanderer say, "that there was no cause for Luther to protest against them and their predecessors." For what end was all this desolation en-

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* Sept. cont. Theb. 434.

† Ceva, Jesus Puer, ix.

‡ De Finibus, iv.

countered? Pierce deep, and say for what you labour. In general, it is the quarrel, not the cause, which wins you. But—

———— "'tis mad idolatry
To make the service greater than the God;
And the will dotes, that is attributive
To what infectiously itself affects
Without some image of the affected merit."

Where ends the tedious, rugged road, you follow? We might answer by citing a French traveller describing the long and perilous descent of the Tayern, where he says, "It reminded me of the valley of Pont-d'Espagne, at Cauterets, or the approach from the Simplon to Domo d'Ossola; but it does not lead to Grenada and to Naples. At the bottom are no brilliant lakes and orange-groves. It is useless to take so much trouble, in order to arrive at potato-fields." Besides a consideration of the produce resulting to the new labourers, there will be a perception in the minds of many obtained from higher grounds of vision, that, as the great Cardinal Hoscius said, ten years before his death, in the testament which he laid up in the private chapel of the Castle of Heilsberg, "whatever might be the plausibility of their theory, invented to get rid of abuses, there could be no reason for hearing or following such reformers." "I wish," they will say with him, "to die in the Catholic faith;" and as a holy minister of the Church, addressing Pope Damasis, said to him, "I know not Vitalis; I reject Melecius; I know not who is Paulinus. He who gathereth not with thee, scattereth. So, in my turn, I say to the successor of that Damasus, 'I know not Luther; I reject Calvin; I know not who is Servetus. He who gathereth not with thee, Pope Pius, scattereth. He who is not a Papist is a Satanist.' I am convinced that, after the name of Christian, I cannot bear a more glorious title, or more useful for salvation, than that of Papist. This is my last will, declaring that I am ready to die, not only in the Catholic Church, but for her*." Such à priori reasoning, at all times suggested by the facts of Christianity, might dispense us from any further observations; but, to wave the advantage, let us proceed to notice other signals.

Amongst these, then, the manner of proceeding must strike observers, too, as eminently unsatisfactory. Tacitus was witness to the last farewell which Nero took of his mother, Agrippina—that parricidal farewell in which the iniquity of the assassin could not entirely extinguish the feeling of the son. There were not wanting witnesses of last meetings previous to the spiritual matricide, in which traces of the same remorse were visible.

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* Theiner, La Suède et le S. Siège, ii. 43.

Hæreticus moderationem hominibus promittit ut noceat*. The secret, however, cannot be long kept. His moderation is intolerance. From time to time he shows himself in mere madness; and thus a while the fit will work on it; yet history and experience forbid us from concluding, that "anon, as patient as the female dove, when that her golden couplets are disclosed, his spirit will sit drooping." History proves that the purposes of his pride have ever steadily been kept in view, and all means for their prosecution been defended, and even glorified; so that,—

"If that be right which these men say is right,
There is no wrong, but every thing is right."

Ages do not seem to effect any considerable change in the spirit which presided at this great revolution. "Propter multitudinem calumniatorum clamabunt et ejulabunt propter vim brachii tyrannorum; for these calumniators," adds St. Odo, commenting the text, "in order to terrify those whom they urge to sin, threaten them with the arm of tyranny†." So it continues; and perhaps to some minds an ample issue to discover truth will be found in observing the eternal cant about the Bible, coupled with that violence and injustice, without an invocation of which Protestantism can furnish no public demonstration of its vitality. Then did the state kill its physician, and the fee bestow upon the foul disease. Though, as Alanus says,—

"Mente minus sanus quam corpore creditur Æger,
Qui medicos ejus fuste vel ense ferit.
Quis magis insanus quam cæcus in ardua ductus,
Si tunc contemnat felle tumente ducem?"

Then recommenced the scenes of the early Church, when the heathen rulers raged against her unfriended, adopted to their hate, dowered with their curse, only that now she is expressly strangered with an oath:—

"Cum nive, cum pluvia, cum grandine vertere Capras,
Ac niti contra fronte videmus oves:
Injustos fraus, ira, nefas, injuria raptant,
Sed justus toto corde resistit eis."

If horror at injustice does not open a wide path from that on which we are now wandering, I know not what will effect a passage. Now the road of the four winds will assume a fearful aspect. Let us seek some cave—'twill be a storm. Blow,

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* S. Maxim. Taurin. Hom. iii.

† Mor. in Job, xxvi.

winds, and crack your cheeks! Impetuous blasts, with eyeless rage, catch in their fury, and make nothing of all barriers. And here are men minded like the weather, more unquiet than the fretful element. The march of "the well-named" through the world has filled these shades with the bitterness of unredeemed death. They have advanced, like Capaneus, swearing to overthrow our walls—*θεοῦ θέλοντος, ἤν τέ με θέλη*[*], and replying to the Catholic Church, like Envy herself, with the old poet,—

> "Hinc ego me non sum nisi te, motura, repulso[†]."

Politic answer, it cannot be denied; for they might explain it, adding,—

> "She hath a daily beauty in her life that makes me ugly."

We may say of heresy, "Ante faciem ejus ignis vorans, et post eum solitudo deserti." It is still seen joined in synod unbenign, and heard, as at Geneva, in 1842, to declare itself "satisfied" with the apology offered by robbery and sacrilege. What scenes! what tragedies! what enormous acts are witnessed here!

Deville, the notary, flying from the Protestants who had seized Mâcon, and traversing the fields and woods, on passing Berzé-le-Châtel, saw them burning alive the curate of the church in his sacerdotal vestments[‡]. It was on this occasion that the invaluable papers and title-deeds of Cluny, the abbey being sacked, were sent to Geneva, some of which were afterwards recovered from that common instigator and receiver of spoliation. "Acts deplorable must accompany all great and useful changes," reply "the well-named." They declare themselves "satisfied." True, the chief agents seem at a distance from such scenes, by reason of their dignities and privileges. True, the chief sufferers were soon forgotten in their graves, or prisons, or in exile. Both were removed from sight, as the Roman orator said, "the one by most shameful honours, the other by most honest calamity." Yet the presence of the great was often manifested by the impunity of injustice, of which Stowe remarked many instances in the march of the same enemy through England; and in his reports there is a mixture of the burlesque with the impious, which renders the spectacle, if possible, more significative. Thus he says, that in London "there is a fair house, with divers tenements near adjoining, some time belonging to a late dissolved priory, since possessed

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[*] Supp. 499.

[†] Met. ii.

[‡] Loraine, Hist. de Cluny, 229.

by Mistress Cornewallies, widow, and her heirs, by gift of Henry VIII., in reward of fine puddings (as it was commonly said), by her made, wherewith she had presented him. Such was the princely liberality of these times. Sir William Powlet built his house on the site of the Augustine friars. The steeple, choir, and side aisles to the choir adjoining, he reserved to household uses, as for stowage of corn, coal, and other things: his son and heir, Marquis of Winchester, sold the monuments of noblemen there buried in great number, the paving-stone, and whatsoever (which cost many thousands), for one hundred pounds, and in place thereof made fair stabling for horses. He caused the lead to be taken from the roofs, and laid tile in place thereof; which change proved not so profitable as he looked for, but rather to his disadvantage."

It is very curious to remark also, how the same spirit that raged against the time-honoured institutions of the Church grew at last to affect men in their private interests, which were then held supreme. Thus he says, "There is in Throgmorton-street one very large and spacious house, built in the place of old and small tenements by Thomas Cromwell, master of the king's jewel-house, after that Master of the Rolls, then Lord Cromwell, Knight, Lord Privy Seal, Vicar-General, Earl of Essex, High Chamberlain of England, &c. This house being finished, and having some reasonable plot of ground left for a garden, he caused the pales of the gardens adjoining to the north part thereof on a sudden to be taken down; twenty-two feet to be measured forth right into the north of every man's ground; a line there to be drawn, a trench to be cast, a foundation laid, and a high brick wall to be built. My father had a garden there, and a house standing close to his south pale; this house they loosed from the ground, and bare upon rollers into my father's garden twenty-two feet, ere my father heard thereof; no warning was given him, nor other answer, when he spake to the surveyors of that work, but that their master, Sir Thomas, commanded them so to do; no man durst go to argue the matter, but each man lost his land, and my father paid his whole rent, which was 6*s.* 6*d.* the year, for that half which was left. Thus much of mine own knowledge have I thought good to note, that the sudden rising of some men causeth them to forget themselves."

But what duty did not such men learn to forget? The Père Petau had made an accurate observation of facts when he concluded, that "the distinctive character of Calvinism, born," as he says, "for the ruin of kings and nations, is to hate all kinds of sovereignty." The Lutheran Episcopacy of Sweden, too, had solemnly approved of regicide and fratricide three-quarters of a century before Cromwell offered in England the second

example of the first of these crimes only[*]. The consequences comprised within the new lessons were pushed to their extreme limits, even from the first; for the sect of Anabaptists, like the modern Communists, undertook, in the name of the Gospel, to reform civil society to its foundations. As the Duc de Noailles says in his late history, "Protestantism sowed a seed which has been productive of general disorder in the political as well as in the moral and religious order. This seed, the right of private judgment, has produced, not the true spirit of freedom, but the revolutionary spirit—it has produced the thirst for change; it has introduced vagueness and anarchy into mind, exaggerated the power of individual reason, and cherished a presumption in the human heart which is incompatible with liberty and peace[†]." And what lessons of goodness had not kings themselves, and Parliaments under the influence of the new opinions, forgotten? Was there not such oblivion in the Parliament of England, when, both Houses joining, it petitioned Charles I. to suffer their new law to take its course, and the seven priests to be put to death? Both Houses were for ever accusing Catholics of a wish to rebel, because they were endeavouring to administer and receive the sacraments; as the Jews of old were accused, because they were rebuilding Jerusalem, while some were in vain repeating before them the words of Nehemias in defence of the people of God, "There is no such thing done as thou sayest; but thou feignest these things out of thy own heart[‡]." Was not the same oblivion witnessed so late as in the reign of Charles II., in which occurred one of the most violent persecutions that ever the English Catholics have undergone? "Yet it is not the king who puts me to death," said one of the martyrs at Tyburn, with charity and profound penetration; "it is heresy."

Charles I. was at York when John Lockwood and Edmund Catherick were martyred there, the head of the former priest being set up on Bootham bar, close by the king's palace, at the manor, where his majesty then resided, insomuch that it was not possible for him to come out of the palace-gate, or even look out from the east, but old Eleazar's bloody head was before his eyes, which must have affected his mind with some troublesome remembrances. The Reverend Hugue Green, departing from Chediok, in Dorsetshire, for the continent, being immediately taken at Lime, the demon's instruments, the blinded Dorcestrians, were clamorous for his blood. From ten in the morning till four in the afternoon the ungodly multitude stayed on the hill and sported themselves at football with his head, and put sticks

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[*] Theiner, La Suède et le S. Siège.

[†] Hist. de Mme. de Maint. iii.

[‡] 2 Esdras vi.

in his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. It was on witnessing his death that one minister who was present, with forty more of his coat, said, "If any more such men should die, and be suffered to speak as he did, they should soon shut up their books." The state used the words of the Duke Frederick, and said of the Catholic Church to her revolted and apostate rival,—

> "She is too subtle for thee; and her smoothness,
> Her very silence, and her patience
> Speak to the people, and they pity her.
> Thou wilt show more bright, and seem more virtuous
> When she is gone: then open not thy lips;
> Firm and irrevocable is my doom
> Which I have pass'd upon her; she is banish'd."

Then the "well-named" maintained so politic a state of evil, that they would not admit any good part to intermingle with them. They rendered England then similar to the state of Cochin China at the present day. We read of the martyr Thomas Holland, during the last two years of his mission, that he went about in the darkness of night or early in the morning, as the priests in Cochin China now go forth from their hiding-places, in order to be serviceable to the souls of the poor. Lord Stafford was found guilty by fifty-five lords, each coursing his own shadow for a traitor, and finding in the aversion which they all entertained for the Catholic religion sufficient proof of guilt. Before the year 1588, that is, before the greatest heat of the persecution, Dr. Bridgewater reckoned, as suffering death or imprisonment for religion, three archbishops, eighteen bishops, one abbot, four whole convents of religious, thirteen deans, fourteen archdeacons, sixty prebendaries, 530 priests, forty-nine doctors of divinity, eighteen doctors of law, fifteen masters of colleges, one queen, eight earls, ten lords, twenty-six knights, 326 gentlemen, sixty ladies, and the champion of England, Mr. Dymock. With such fact before their eyes, men might have been pardoned, perhaps, for suggesting that the Apocalyptic mark of "sitting on many waters" could be applicable to some other empire besides that of Pagan Rome; and even for repeating, with a view to the symbols of a persecuting power, the words of the sacred prophecy, as presenting at least a striking coincidence, "Save me from the lion's mouth, and from the horns of the unicorns *." Were they to watch the course of the same opinions on the continent, those who love them would find details equally as unsatisfactory. The right of insurrection proclaimed by synods, a civil war of forty years in France, during which the whole country was covered with ruins and pillage, horrible acts of vengeance,

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* Seager's Letter to a Friend.

foreigners called in to take part in the quarrel, the vast conspiracy of Amboise, the two massacres of the Catholics in Nîmes —the one called the Michelade, on St. Michael's night, in 1567, and the other as terrible, in 1569; the sedition and war of the Camisards, in which fifty-four churches were burned to the ground, and many priests massacred, while England and Holland were sending them assistance—such are the facts marking the progress of the reform in that kingdom, which it is difficult to reconcile with the intention proclaimed by its authors, though indeed, as the Cardinal Richelieu said on one occasion, they made demands which could not have been granted even if the council itself of the king had been Huguenot. Looking at the farthest points, the observers would see what barbarous persecutions marked the introduction of the Lutheran theory into Sweden; they would behold Gustavus Wasa violating the safe conduct which he had given, without condition expressed or implied, to the bishop, Peter Jacobssohn, and putting him to death at Stockholm, when he presented himself on the strength of it, and trusting to the solemn personal promise of the king. "The cruel atrocities," says a recent historian, "perpetrated by the Lutherans in Sweden, on first introducing their religion, cannot be described. No pen should record such abominations." The reformers forged letters as coming from the Pope, in order to irritate the king, Gustavus Wasa, while yet wavering, against the Holy See; which odious policy was crowned with success [*]." In general, too, they would remark that the people, when left to themselves, detested the proposed innovations, and sought often, at the peril of their lives, to prevent their establishment. In Sweden these poor peasants attempted to defend their faith by arms, being overcome both in a sanguinary war and also by the wiles and falsehood of the king, Gustavus Wasa [†]. In England, even, partly, a similar popular movement was begun. In France the people left no one ignorant of their appreciations. "The people in Normandy," says a recent historian, who is by no means prejudiced in favour of antiquity, "being always the implacable enemy of the Huguenots, pursued them every where, crying out 'hust,' in spite of the decrees of the parliament prohibiting this cry, at which the new religionists were beyond measure offended [‡]." The people soon perceived the blighting influence of the sophistry which comes for their desolation, and, like the tyrannous breathing of the north, shakes all our buds from growing. The descendants of a devoted peasantry present now often a fearful spectacle. "O Lord," exclaimed Abimelech, "wilt thou slay a nation that is ignorant and just?

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[*] Theiner, La Suède et le S. Siège, i. 237.

[†] Id.

[‡] Floquet, Hist. du Parlement de Norm. tom. iv. 69.

In the simplicity of my heart and cleanness of my hands have I done this." Catholicism does not forbid all hope respecting such a population. "As for other Greeks," said the divine voice to St. Bridget, "who earnestly wish, but are unable to know, the Catholic and Roman faith, and who, if they could know it, would willingly receive it and humbly subject themselves to the Roman Church, and who, according to their consciences and the faith that they have, abstain from sinning and live piously, my mercy after their death is due to them, when they shall be called to my judgment *." The impression, let us repeat it, resulting from this dismal history, cannot be neutralized by observing, that the Catholic Church, and that Catholic states sought to defend themselves against this canker of our nature, growing with such cozenage to a prodigious and incomparable calamity.

"The holy Catholic Church," says St. Isidore, "patiently tolerates those living ill in it, but those believing ill she rejects." "A mere material act," says Ives de Chartres, "like that of investiture, cannot be called heresy; but we judge those who arrogate this power to themselves as heretics, not on account of the manual investiture, but on account of the diabolic presumption †." "The holy Church," as St. Isidore says, "against the pertinacity of Gentiles and heretics studies to oppose wisdom and patience, her wisdom being exercised when she is tempted with words, and her patience when she is assailed with swords; for at one time she is persecuted by violent acts, and at another by false assertions ‡." Those believing ill she separates from the fold. "Sentence has been passed on you," says Lanfranc to Berenger, "privans te communione sanctæ Ecclesiæ, quam tu privare sancta ejus communione satagebas." But it is easy to perceive the reason for this severity; "for," he continues, "they who are faithful, but depraved in manners, do not resolve pertinaciously to defend their depravity; but, having understood authorities and heard reasons, they rather desire to return humbly to the way of truth. Few things suffice to them, and for few persons; but they who obstinately desire to serve contentions, and to persist in their infidelity, cannot be restrained, whatever may be opposed to them §." "The censure of the Church," says St. Isidore, "often seems to be pride to the arrogant; et quod à bonis piè fit, crudeliter fieri putatur à pravis, quia non discernunt recto oculo quod à bonis recto fit animo ||." Nevertheless, it is only to defend the sheep that such wolves are driven off; and, where they do not seek to devour, no arm is raised against them. "Therefore the elect, at the end of the world,"

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* Revelat. S. Birg. lib. vii. c. 19.

† Ep. 136.

‡ De Sum. Bon. lib. i. c. 19.

§ Lib. de Corpore et Sang. Dom.

|| Id. iii. 46.

says St. Odo, "under the persecution of Antichrist, will recollect these times, in which as now the Church holds the peace of faith, and compresses the proud necks of heretics, not by the exercise of power, but by the yoke of reason *." "Fides nequaquam vi extorquetur, sed ratione atque exemplis suadetur," says St. Isidore. "If," he adds, "they be violently required to believe, men cannot persevere; for, as in an example of a new plant, if any one should bend down the top with force, and then withdraw his hand, it will immediately relapse to its former position; so man, who by free will turned from God, must, by a voluntary conversion of his own mind, return to God, that his liberty may be manifest †." The state, it is true, was not always so easily contented as the Church; and to her reasons and censures it added disqualifications and penalties of its own to stay the evil of heresy. The Theodosian and Justinian codes had ordained penalties for all heretics; and this principle of the unity of worship in the state, and of the intimate union of the two powers, continued to be regarded as one of the necessary bases of government and of society. The four councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, had been successively placed among the laws of the empire; and temporal pains were awarded against the transgressors of these laws. The whole world, so late as the seventeenth century, continued under the influence of the idea that heresy was an injury to society which the civil power had a right to avert ‡; so that, according to all ancient legislation, these secular assemblies that pretend to subject all things spiritual as well as temporal to laws of their own enacting, are composed of men who "ipso jure sunt infames, inhabiles publicis oneribus obeundis, et intestabiles," as Robert d'Arbriselle remarks §. Yet, when we consider the seditions and crimes with which the new opinions were every where introduced, and the political character which they assumed in later times, it is not difficult to account for the public judgment which sanctioned such legislation. There may have been wrongs on both sides; but it is no less certain that the opposition to faith was the original, direct, habitual, and always active cause of those disorders which endangered and embittered society. To guard against vindictive law-suits brought against Catholic converts, to prevent poor and ignorant Catholics from being perverted by money and intrigues, to prevent the sick from being molested and the young from being threatened in consequence of their desire of conversion, were strictly defensive measures; and, as for the subsequent proceedings in the reign of Louis XIV.,

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* Mor. in Job, xix. † De Summo Bono, lib. ii. c. 2.

‡ Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Mme. de Maint. iv.

§ Rob. d'Arbriselle, Opus Quad. iv.

it ill became Protestantism to raise its voice against them, when in England and Ireland, at the very time, it steadily pursued a system of pure, unrestrained, and avowed religious persecution of the most inhuman kind, and accepted with joy a war of extermination, sending all the children of its victims for slaves in Jamaica, and executing an unparalleled legislation to put down the ancient faith, while arming Protestant Europe against what it termed the intolerance of the French monarch[*]. But to return to the ecclesiastical discipline with which we are more immediately concerned. "Every imitator of the devil," says Rupertus, "seeks, like him, to show himself as God; for when excommunicated he accuses his judges, and proclaims himself alone just[†]." And yet such wisdom is manifest in all the censures of the Church, that we observe sometimes, disarmed by a sense of it, the great intelligences that are stranded on the shore of heresy, as when Lord Bacon, speaking of Pius V., who had excommunicated Elizabeth, says, "I am surprised that the Roman Church has not yet canonized this great man." As to the twofold resistance offered to heresy of old, much may be advanced in its apology if it should be thought to need it. "Chore, Dathan, and Abiron," says Robert d'Arbriselle, "never presumed so far as this Lutheran pestilence, which, with tyrannic violence and the exercise of brute force, compels to migrate the ancient colonists, driving out monks from their cloisters, without law or right of trial, plundering their sacred vessels, and inviting all to licentiousness. The heretic tries to collect disciples of his error, and immediately seeking a meeting-house, he says, if any seditious tumult should be the consequence, that the question not being sufficiently discussed, the prince ought to restrain both parties alike[‡]." Why should the state be deemed so guilty for not suffering itself to be cheated by such arts, and for not permitting the most important of all interests, faith, to be called publicly in question, all of a sudden, by preachers who could produce no authority for their mission, laying their bait of falsehood to take the carp of truth? For, be it remembered, certainty in religion belongs to Catholicism. Who can affirm, asks Savonarola, that such men as Hilary, Basil, Athanasius, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustin, and our Thomas Aquinas could be deceived? for we have proved that God has providence of human things. Where would be the justice of that providence if those men, who exposed themselves and all things for his honour, should be permitted to be deceived in their faith? Must not God have loved them who loved Him above all things[§]?

[*] Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Mme. de Maint. iv.

[†] De Vict. Verb. Dei, xiii. 10.

[‡] Opus Quad. lib. iv.

[§] De Veritate Fidei Christianæ, ii.

Without doubt Catholicism in government required that such innovation should be restrained; but, as Robert d'Arbriselle says, "gravius et interius flagellum surdumque vulnus dæmonis, quam externum supplicium corporis." Accusing each other of heresy, one of their own guides says, "They boast much of martyrs to uphold their heresy, but if you would call to mind what Eusebius in his fifth book recites from Appolinarius of Hierapolis, you should then hear it esteemed no other than an old heretical argument, to prove a position true, because some that held it were martyrs; this was that which gave boldness to the Marcionists and Cataphryges to avouch their impious heresies for pious doctrine, because they could reckon many martyrs of their sect; and, when they were confuted in other points, this was ever their last and stoutest plea *." And, after all, how little was real liberty and personal freedom compromised when men did not seek to subdue the wills of others by insidious preaching! "Here at least," writes General Moreau from Cadiz, when banished from France by Napoleon,—"ici au moins nous respirons en liberté, quoique dans le pays de l'inquisition." In punishment, however, the state, after all, had regard more to its temporal interests than to any thing else; "for in the punishment of heretics," says Robert d'Arbriselle, "non tam vindicta queritur, quam quies et tranquillitas reipublicæ Christianæ, ut scilicet pestilente correpto, malevolorum reprimatur audacia, et tuta sit inter improbos innocentia. Non cogitur hæreticus ad fidem, sed ejus coercetur audacia qui alios quantum in se est perdidit †." Of the audacity of those new guides proofs in every form were given. Moynet de Tancourt, a Huguenot magistrate, whom Henry IV. befriended in Rouen, one day seeing in the hands of a bookseller a work by Benoist, the curé of St. Eustache, written against the Huguenots, fell upon him, abused, and struck him in the public street ‡. Chaucer, as we have seen, had to be restrained from beating a friar; and no doubt, under this banner, the number was not small, of men who resembled Thrasymachus, as described by Plato, who after hearing Socrates with impatience, when he had ceased, could not contain himself longer, but came upon him like a ferocious animal to devour him §. If heresy was such in its childhood, there was every probability that, when grown to full size, it would be terrible to governments as well as to individuals. Accordingly, "the Jesuits," says the Comte de Maistre, "have meddled with politics so far as crying to kings with an indefatigable voice for three centuries, 'Voilà le monstre! prenez garde à vous! Point

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* Milton. † Id. iv.

‡ Floquet, Hist. du Parl. de Norm. iv. 105.

§ De Repub. i.

de milieu ! il vous tuera si vous ne le tenez, ou si vous ne l'enchaînez.'" And yet who believed them ? Madame de Maintenon assured the Cardinal de Noailles, that they had no power, no credit, except in their colleges. "Calvinism," he adds, "works secretly. It keeps the noise for the end. This terrible sect, which may be called legion, is more to be feared now than ever ; above all, on account of its alliances*." They condemn the secret precautions which the civil government, in union with the Church, adopted against insidious error ; but had they not from the beginning their own secret societies, which rendered such prudential measures justifiable ? They speak with horror of interfering with families ; but the Comité Occulte de l'Union Protestante of Geneva was a mysterious society lately, if not still, existing, whose object was to keep off Catholics from entering families as servants, to prevent persons from buying from Catholic merchants, to cause mixed marriages, and to educate the children of Protestants ; to act with magistrates and municipal councils by solicitations, with citizens by remonstrances, and in case of need by offers of service ; to introduce foreign Protestants, in order to create opposition to Catholics in the same trades, and to prevent, in short, by all possible means, the establishment of Catholics, and their admission to the rights of citizenship. The Colonel Rilliet-Constant was the first to publish these details; and later, in 1844, some "friends of publicity" contrived to print, at Geneva, the manual of the members †. Insidious arts are thus conjoined with violence whenever a state adopts the principle that is called Protestant ascendancy. Then all things are confounded, and Catholicism is stigmatized as a pernicious novelty.

If the state consents at last to stay such violence, there is a cry, and, perhaps, not without some appearance of truth, that it is weakness, rather than the will, that orders it so. You give equal rights — sed senescentis — keen observers will declare, magis civitatis quam acquiescentis—then Catholics in every town will have a neighbour, who verifies the adage of Alanus,—

"Fragrantes vicina rosas urtica perurit,
Sic justos semper turbat iniquus homo."

Then, during the dangerous unsafe lunes of the "well-named," must Catholics be gone, or else abide the hourly shot of angry eyes ; then will they hear, from time to time, threats of "giving fear to use and liberty to restrain," those who have for long run by the hideous law, as mice by lions ;—then, to prevent a gene-

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* Cinq Lettres sur l'Educat. Publique en Russie.

† L'Univers, 7th June, 1844.

ral outbreak, and save the destined victims, it may be politic for a prime minister to appear for a moment as if his breath, with full consent, were bellying the sails of persecutors, and to promise them "to institute a careful examination of the present state of the law;" to take into "deliberate consideration the propriety of adopting some proceedings," if the previous law should prove inadequate. Then lawyers will offer their best service to pick out acts, under whose heavy sense the most illustrious men and holy saints can be arrested as malefactors. They are ready at a word to awake all the enrolled penalties, which have, like unscoured armour, hung by the wall; and then, for a name, with a gross and savage injustice, patriots, merchants, lawyers, ministers will hope to put the drowsy and neglected act freshly upon them. All this, say its friends, is "manly spirit," and no less policy to uphold the state—threats which may, in fact, intimidate the wisest government; for the "well-named" have their traditions, which render them formidable, if any minister venture to put a curb on their unjust will. It irks them not to speak of scurrilous vulgarity, nor yet of savage violence. Pride alone, for aught they care, may tarre the mastiffs on, as 'twere, their bone. When legally restrained from persecuting, they have infinite arts of intimidation; their cries even constitute a power. They cry out, like the furies whom Minerva checks:—

ἰὼ θεοὶ νεώτεροι παλαιοὺς νόμους
καθιππάσασθε, κἀκ χερῶν εἵλεσθέ μου.
ἐγὼ δ᾽ ἄτιμος ἡ τάλαινα βαρύκοτος,
ἐν γᾷ τᾷδε, φεῦ,
ἰοὺ, ἰοὺ, ἀντιπαθῆ
μεθεῖσα καρδίας σταλαγμὸν
χθονιαφόρον[*]·

ἐμὲ παθεῖν τάδε, φεῦ,
ἐμὲ παλαιόφρονα κατὰ γᾶν οἰκεῖν
ἀτίετον, φεῦ, μύσος
πνέω τοι μένος, ἅπαντά τε κότον[†].

"Ah, new deities, you have trampled on the ancient laws—you have snatched the guilty from my hands, and I, dishonoured, wretched, and inflamed with rage, I will visit the land! Yes, visit it, and bring the contagious venom of my heart! What! I consent to my shame! Great gods! I, so faithful to old decrees, dwell in this land, and be an object of contempt! horror! horror! Let me exhale my wrath and my vengeance! Hear, mother night, the expressions of my indignation!"

Thus, in short, from first to last, are the historical results of

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[*] Eumen. 778.

[†] 870.

Protestantism, to men of dispassionate minds, unsatisfactory. England, too, has had her Helen, and may exclaim, "Alas, what calamities have been wrought!"

——— γυναικείας διὰ βουλὰς
ἐξ ἀρχῆς*.

The world has witnessed—

"Millions of spirits for his fault amerced
Of heaven, and from eternal splendours flung,
For his revolt."

It has seen, and ought to blush at seeing, only in remembrance,—

——— "The sires of those, who now,
As surely as your church is vacant, flock
Into her consistory, and at leisure
There stall them and grow fat."

They began by protesting against the Holy See, and now, they are at least allied with men who protest against every thing except themselves. They triumph, they exult to think of what they overthrew before; but still they are looking for somewhat more to dissect and to curtail—to dissolve and to annihilate.

—— "Overgorged; but, like oppressors, still
They crave the relic of destruction's feast."

Thus, the "well-named" have passed;—

"And after them a rude confused rout is passing,
Emongst them is sterne Strife; and Anger stout;
Unquiet Care; and fond Unthriftyhead;
Lewd Losse of Time; and Sorrow seeming dead;
Inconstant Change; and false Disloyalty;
Consuming Riotise; and guilty Dread;
Vile Poverty; and, lastly, Death with infamy."

Behind them are—

—— "Reproach, Repentance, Shame:
Reproach the first, Shame next, Repent behinde.
Repentance feeble, sorrowfull, and lame;
Reproach despightful, carelesse, and unkinde;
Shame most ill-favour'd bestiall, and blinde:
All these to each unlike, yet all made in one mould."

Balmes observes that the universal impulse of civilization in the sixteenth century was diverted, stopped, not promoted, by the reform †. "Humanly speaking," he says, "the whole world

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* Od. xi. 436.

† Ch. 45.

must have yielded to the influence of Europe, if disunion had not suddenly destroyed its power, and weakened and counteracted the influence of faith. After Luther, the chief part of its intellectual force was employed in a struggle between brethren. Nations, still faithful, had to concentrate all their resources to resist the impious attacks directed against themselves; the others, who had contracted the contagion, were reduced to a state of madness, which prompted them to forget every thing but their hatred of Rome. Europe became struck with sterility. This is, then, the great secret cause why Christianity has made so little progress in later times in comparison with the first ages. The Protestant schism has given a fatal blow to the European influence. If that deplorable revolution had not occurred, the situation of the world would be now very different from what it is; but unity has been broken, and every thing becomes impracticable and impossible." That mutable and transitory character of errors against faith, which we have already noticed as essential to them, is fully attested by the history of their origin and progress. Would you learn from any sect the nature of its belief? Then be quick in your interrogations, as if you heard that voice, with Dante, saying,—

"Inquire of it, if more thou wish to learn,
Ere it again be rent *."

Mary, queen of England, on one occasion chose for device the words, "Veritas temporis filia." Just judgment will have its day, even on earth; and so we hear it cry, "'Tis true. The wheel is come full circle; I am here!" "Time sees pass away many heresies," as Rupertus says. "A generation passes, a generation comes; but He, to whom it is said, 'Tu autem idem ipse es et anni tui non deficient,' remains firm in his purpose †."

——"He waits,
Enduring thus, the retributive hour,
Which, since we spake, is even nearer now."

But Protestantism, you reply, lasts. Yes, like the poppy, of which, say old herbalists, the root perishes every year, springing again of its own sowing. Protestantism is refuted, disproved, its intellectual root, as it were, destroyed every year by the voice of truthful guides, by the course of human events, by new facts, by its own disabused members recoiling from it, by the very principle of its own organization; but it is still found plentiful enough, growing amidst fields of corn, as well as in every

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* Hell, 22.

† De Vict. Verbi Dei, x. 24.

ditch. Is it possible disdain should die, while so many live by keeping it alive?

> ——"No, with vemous wight she stays,
> As tediously as hell; but flies the grasps of love,
> With wings more momentary-swift than thought."

How could the theologic system founded on it wholly disappear? "For that to be possible," says Balmes, "these nations must either sink into universal impiety and atheism, or embrace some other religion, either idolatry or Mahometanism; but neither of these suppositions is possible. Therefore, this false Christianity must continue under some form or other, till the Protestants return into the bosom of the Church*." The Moors, in Spain, excited the pity, and often the affections, of their conquerors. Under the protection of their weakness and misfortunes, they offered a dangerous seduction to their masters. Their country was limited to the domestic hearth; and, when that last asylum was laid open, there was inhaled a melancholy poesy, a plaintive eloquence of dejection and poverty. The Spaniard, who met the Moor amidst the ruins of desert palaces, and on the brink of dried-up fountains, felt his heart softened; and from that involuntary compassion there arose sometimes criminal passions and secret associations. Were Protestantism ever to pass away thus, it would leave after it no ruins but those of its own making; remembrance could never cling to it with affection, distance could impart to it no grandeur, nor could it wear the semblances of sanctity even in its death. Past ages crowd on it; each one remembers the beginning;—

> "And the future is dark, and the present is spread,
> Like a pillow of thorns, for its slumberless head."

Whereas, Catholicism, with heavenly lustre crowned, has been known to pass majestical from some unhappy lands and all succeeding generations, to yield men, not undistinguished by their wisdom, who recur with mourning to its memory. As the poet represents the woods and streams lamenting Orpheus, we may truly say of the Church when banished,—

> "Te rigidi silices, tua carmina sæpe secutæ
> Fleverunt silvæ; positis te frondibus arbos
> Tonsa comas luxit †."

You have banished, as you thought, every external sign of Catholicity. No one, you think, can see the Church. But, to use ancient words in a new sense, "numquam tibi populi Romani absentis dignitas, numquam species ipsa hujuscemodi

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[*] Ch. x.

[†] Met. xi.

multitudinis, in oculis animoque versata est? Numquam te in horum conspectum rediturum, numquam in forum populi Romani venturum, numquam sub legum et judiciorum potestatem casurum esse putasti*?" And, besides, though you think the Church cannot be seen, because you have whitened walls where fluttering textures waved, you cannot prevent her from being heard. She can say, with the poet, "I am here;"—

——"Nullique videnda
Voce tamen noscar; vocem mihi fata relinquent†."

A voice remains to her; and, oh, what a voice is that! As Alanus de Insulis describes it:—

"Absque vigore potens, sine motu cuncta gubernans;
Absque loco loca cuncta replens, sine tempore durans;
Absque situ residens, habitus ignarus habendo
Cuncta simul, sine voce loquens, sine pace quietus‡."

The cloud now, in some places, covers the tabernacles, where once God dwelt with men; but who is there, led by that voice, "that cannot trace her now in her beamy walk through the midst of her sanctuary, amidst those golden candlesticks, which have long suffered a dimness amongst us through the violence of those that had seized them, and were more taken with the mention of their gold than of their starry light?" Then will be heard a faithful invocation, "Come, therefore, O thou that hast the seven stars in thy right hand, appoint thy chosen priests according to their orders and courses of old, to minister before thee, and duly to press and pour out the consecrated oil into thy holy and ever-burning lamps! Come forth out of thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the kings of the earth! put on the visible robes of thy imperial majesty, take up that unlimited sceptre which thy almighty Father hath bequeathed thee; for now the voice of thy bride calls thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed."

Again, to men who have any regard for virtue, at least in its ancient form and substance, the moral results of the new opinions are defective and unsatisfactory, and hence another negative signal pointing the way to the Catholic Church. The "well-named" are not like Ajax, vulnerable only in one part which was not covered with the lion's skin. On every side can be felt their weakness. Oh, how unlike the inviolable saints!

"Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd,
Such high advantages their innocence
Gives them above their foes."

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* Cicero in Ver. act. ii. lib. v.

† Met. xiv.

‡ Alani Encyclopædia, lib. v. c. iii.

The "well-named" often take advantage of ground that does not by right belong to them, and claim for themselves the beauty of creatures over whom in reality they have no influence. They point out a noble population which they have been permitted to afflict, and proudly challenge comparison; but, however they may wish it, they cannot permanently make even all the unbaked and doughy youth of a nation in their colour. The manly intellect, the unflinching courage, the loving spirit, are not fruits from their stem. The roots of such things are elsewhere. Wherever you see a cheerful unaffected countenance, beaming with good will, or any other sweet and simple expression of humanity, recognize the origin; it is love, it is obedience, it is respect; and these have their centre, not in the volumes of Luther or Calvin, or in the institutions of Knox and Cranmer, but in Catholicity, which, for many ages before Protestantism was heard of, as the poet says of his beloved Salopia,—

> "Eyed her bright form in Severn's ambient wave,
> Her daughters lovely, and her striplings brave."

For these children of the many, call them by what name you will, no harsh judgment or reproof are here intended. To them I say,—

> "Thy garments are not spotted with our blood,
> Nor thou within the compass of my blame."

But, when we meet the real offspring of the false reform, the case indeed is very different; and, as they choose to identify themselves wholly with the cause inscribed upon their banner, they cannot expect to have their individual merits distinguished, or to experience an indulgence of which it is unworthy. Yet if, in taking note of what here is seen to cross our path, my words should seem to argue malice, let me undeceive you.

> —— "Oh, that I, whom ye have made
> Your foe, could set my dearest enemy free
> From pain and fear! but evil casts a shade
> Which cannot pass so soon, and Hate must be
> The nurse and parent still of an ill progeny."

Here some might recommend a cautious prelude, like the question of Ulysses—may a friend tell you the truth without losing your friendship?—

> *ἔξεστιν οὖν εἰπόντι τἀληθῆ φίλῳ,*
> *σοί μηδὲν ἧσσον ἢ πάρος ξυνπρετμεῖν* * ;

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* Soph. Ajax, 1328.

Hardly, indeed, can pardon be expected for what must now be spoken, though it is a studied, not a present thought, by duty ruminated. But, however unwilling each wanderer may be to relate his own experience, the forest itself will proclaim what are the results that follow here :—

> "The frosts of many a wind with dead leaves fill
> Earth's cold and sullen brooks."

The moral changes following the lines of demarcation effected by the rule of heresy, can be recalled by those extensive arid tracts, destitute of plants in the midst of countries rich in luxuriant vegetation, which are attributed to ancient revolutions of nature, such as inundations or great volcanic catastrophes. Catholics, for the most part, withdrawing from some regions, leaving but few to practise the old morality, we seem transported to those African deserts, where a few scattered fan-palms alone recall to the wanderer's recollection that these awful solitudes belong to the domain of the same animated terrestrial creation which is elsewhere so rich and varied, and where the fantastic play of the mirage sometimes causes these palm-trees to appear in a distorted position ; as in such districts every thing in the Catholic civilization appears inverted to those whom heresy has deprived of clear unclouded vision.

"You shall know them by their fruits," said Truth, referring us to the trees for a symbol of human life ; " not by their leaves or flowers," adds Robert d'Arbriselle, commenting the text ; " for it is peculiar to heretics," he continues, " to deceive the incautious by the artificial colouring of words which tempt them, as if with the beauty of foliage ; but look at their fruits, and doubt will not be in the judgment ; for idiots, in this case of favour, would be wisely definite." " Compare," says Robert d'Arbriselle ; " place before your eyes, such men as Augustin, Jerome, Benedict, Francis, Dominic, Thomas, Bonaventura, Gerson, Alexander, Basil, or Bernard, in whose writings whatever is read has an odour of penitence, of sobriety, of prudence, of discipline, of faith. Every word is pious, charitable, luminous, rendering all who followed them chaste, humble, sober, modest, and persevering in virtue to the end of their lives. Then look at the Lutheran hosts and judge * "—but yet, though palpable, is here the fact, not hastily, not inconsiderately ; since passions often interpose ; even with the very comment of thy soul observe them ; for careless glances cannot always suffice to form a just comparison, since as Dumain says,—

> ——— " Ill to example ill,
> Will from the forehead wipe a perjured note,
> And none offend where all alike do dote."

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* Rob. Arboricens. Op. quadripart. ii.

If we imagine no worse of the "well-named" than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. But, saving all due respect to them, the road of the four winds cannot be favourable to virtue of the old mark. "Nam qui sine humilitate virtutes congregat," says St. Gregory, "quasi in ventum pulverem portat*." "Pride," says Alanus de Insulis, "is a wind which raises the dust from off the face of the earth; for it removes the proud from the stability of the eternal life." Perhaps no one better represents the energetic life of Protestantism in the sixteenth century than that Theodore Agrippa d'Aubigné, "whose pen was as active as his sword," whose universal history of his times was burned, by order of the Parliament, for containing many things against the state and the honour of kings and queens. Writer, warrior, theologian, controversialist—true type of the Huguenots' armipotent soldiers, independent, inflexible in their hatred of Popery†. But are such manners perfectly in character with the part of those who pretended to be pure and reformed disciples of Jesus Christ? We do not find the primitive Christians always armed with helmet on the head and dagger in hand, or noted for their satires against kings and all persons in authority. Speaking of the Augustinians in Belgium during the persecutions by Protestants, Crusenius says, "I have myself seen there such zeal among our brethren, and such a concourse of laity in secret to the divine worship, that I thought the first apostolic ages were returned, and that I beheld the primitive face of the Church. Wool-carders, booksellers, leather-workers, dyers, soldiers, and nobles, seemed to be like monks and priests; and were so; for they carried the books of the gospels with them every where, exposed their lives for the sake of their brethren, and showed true Catholic nobility in their manners and in their faith‡."

Is this the state of things to which the "well-named" lead a country? Is it the general prayer there, as in the Catholic Church, "ut in nomine Christi mereamur bonis operibus abundare per eumdem Dominum?" The soil of Sweden is said to be gradually rising since some centuries; but is there any trace of the minds of its inhabitants rising from the deep prostration in which the "well-named" have left them? There are central forces which can upheave the once thought solid earth; but, alas! the gracious influences that lie within truth's centre, if wilfully resisted, will become at last powerless and dormant, even, perhaps, till they shall be wakened by the final catastrophe. "Though Catholic faith is in the heart, and heretical error in

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* Sup. Ps. 3 Pœnit.

† Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Mme. de Maintenon, i.

‡ Crusen. Monasticon August. iii. c. 47.

the heart, yet," says Ives of Chartres, "as from Catholic works we recognize the Catholic, so from heretical works we discern the heretic*." Truly, then, it requires not the eyes of a lynx to make the distinction. "Among venomous things," says Pliny, "the wickedness of the salamander is greatest; for, if it creep up a tree, it infects all its fruit with poison, so that they who eat of it die, by force of the cold poison infused into them†." Ridicule, if you will, the fancy of the old naturalist; but say, what is there that the cold of doubt and suspicion, the cold of proud reliance upon private judgment, does not affect with a most pernicious influence, though it may be with some as with vinegar, which, cold as it is, never freezes? St. Augustin uses strong language, saying of the Church, "Ab ea vero seperati, quamdiu contra illam sentiunt, boni esse non possunt; quia etsi aliquos eorum bonos videtur ostendere quasi laudabilis conversatio, malos eos facit ipsa divisio, dicente Domino, Qui mecum non est, adversum me est‡. Nothing," he says elsewhere, "can compensate for the one act of separation: hence that oracle of holy Scripture, 'Filius malus ipse se justum dicit, exitum autem suum non abluit.'" Again, he says, "Quisquis ab hac Catholica Ecclesia fuerit separatus, quantumlibet se vivere existimet, hoc solo scelere, quod a Christi unitate disjunctus est, non habebit vitam, sed ira Dei manet super eum§." "These are mystical interpretations," you will reply. Supposing that they are therefore inefficient, still men who will not enter into the Catholic view can hardly fail to notice the practical moral effects that visibly followed the preaching of the new opinions. When John III., king of Sweden, began to despair of restoring the Catholic religion to his unhappy country, he said to the nuncio, "At least, I will endeavour, as far as I can, to make my subjects observe some fasts and ceremonies, hear sermons on good works, and practise other similar usages, in order that they may not fall back again to Paganism||." The fact might be stated in the familiar language of the poet, which, without a shadow of unfair exaggeration, can be applied to it: for there's no motion that tends to vice in man, but I affirm, it is the part of the pride which produces opposition to the Catholic faith: be it lying, note it for being of that pride;—

——— "flattering, hers; deceiving, hers;
Lust and rank thoughts, hers, hers; revenges, hers;
Ambitions, covetings, change of prides, disdain,
Nice longings, slanders, mutability—
All faults that may be named—nay, that hell knows;

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* Iv. Carnot, Epist. ccxxxvii.

† N. H. lib. xxix. 23.

‡ Epist. ccix.

§ Ep. ad Donatistas.

|| Theiner, La Suède et le S. Siège.

Why, hers, in part, or all; but rather, all;
For even to vice
It is not constant, but is changing still
One vice, but of a minute old, for one
Not half so old as that."

Or we may say, alluding to it,—

"Oh! many fearful natures in one name,
I know ye; and this land knows well
The darkness and the clangour of your wings."

According to St. Stephen of Grandmont, the mere fact of rejecting Catholicity argues some subtle infusion of sin into the heart. "Veritas enim," he says, "semper est dulcis, nec ob aliud difficilis est homini nisi propter rubiginem vitiorum quam habet in se,—as a sick man finds bitter to his taste what would be sweet if he were in health*." St. Thomas of Villanova therefore speaks as follows: "We see the progress of heresy in Germany and England; and it is to be feared that the same thing will happen in other parts of Christendom on account of our sins; for although we do not commit idolatry, or kill corporally Christ and the prophets, yet we are guilty of many other sins which may draw down on us His wrath. Observe in the Scriptures, that His vengeance does not descend solely on account of idolatry, but also to punish luxury, avarice, injustice, and treachery, all which sins, with the sole exception of idolatry, are now found with the Christian people †." The devil asked permission to deceive Achab, and this by means of false prophets; and God granted it. "Hence," says Antonio de Guevara, preaching in the Monastery of Arevalo, "we may learn the difference between the friends and the enemies of God; for He permits those who serve Him to be tempted, and those who offend Him to be deceived." So we read, "This they thought, and erred, malice blinding them, and they knew not the sacraments of God." "Many," says St. Isidore, "are deceived by the devil, and know not that they are deceived ‡." Heresy is confined to no limits. Mahometanism itself is a heresy. Peter the Venerable, in a letter to St. Bernard, calls Mahometanism "the dregs of all heresies, in which are the remains of all the diabolic sects that had risen since the coming of the Saviour." The moral sense of the new instructors who seek to glorify the system of the false Eastern prophet, or at least who evince a certain affinity in its regard, may be contrasted with the idea entertained in the thirteenth century, respecting the legislator of the Arabs, and of his doctrine; for

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* S. Steph. Grandim. Liber Sententiarum, xi.

† Fer. vi. post 2 Dom. Quad.

‡ De Sum. Bono, iii. 2.

Mathieu Paris says, that "a writing which contained a recital of the errors, or rather, madness of Mahomet, addressed to Gregory IX. by the preaching friar who had been sent to the Saracens, having come to the knowledge of many, excited against that impostor a concert of hisses and hootings*." An affinity also with the liberty of an unsanctified nature, uninfluenced by revelation, has always characterized many of the followers of the reformed banner, while Catholicism will not pass beyond the limits seen by Cicero, when he said, "Quod verum, simplex, sincerum sit, id esse naturæ hominis aptissimum†." "It is certain," says Goethe, "that the human mind sought to emancipate itself by the Reformation. We have felt the want of a life more fine, more elegant, and more gracious. But what, above all, favoured this change was, that the heart demands always to return to a certain state of nature, simple and noble; and that the imagination seeks, without ceasing, to concentrate itself on something worthy of it." This return to "a state of nature" was expressed by old simple writers in the lines so little flattering, which proclaimed the heretic to be merely a bad Catholic :—

> "Quod genus Hæreticus ? quæ fæx ? quo belua vultu ?
> Catholici vappa; et fidei desertor avitæ."

And, in fact, to witness the grounds of this opinion, we need not look farther than to the pages of the very book which represent these supposed natural characters; for the description which Goethe gives of the persons in whose society he passed his youth must be understood as exhibiting them. Now, who can love, esteem, or respect the men to whom he introduces us in his autobiography? Their morals and their opinions, it is true, seem equally emancipated from all control but such, as with pride more than human, they choose to impose upon themselves. But is there, in consequence, any thing attractive about them? any thing indicative of a return to a beautiful or happy state of nature? The few persons who appear exempt from glaring faults, not to say execrable vices, in the work, by a strange inadvertence of the author, seem to be Catholics; as, for example, Count Thorane, and the actuary Sabzmann. His own superstitions as to omens, and his expressions so boldly opposed to all Christian doctrine, not to qualify them as they deserve, supply a significant comment on his preceding text. Probably, indeed, from the first the same spirit which modern German rationalists cultivate at present was at work among the innovators. The Albigenses, at the siege of Béziers, threw down from their walls the books of the gospels, blaspheming the name of the Lord, and crying to the besiegers, "There is your law; we do

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* Ad ann. 1236.

† De Off. i. 4.

not want it; keep it for yourselves[*]." Writing to Vincentius, Sidonius, speaking of the fall of Arvandus, says, "Denique non eum aliquando cecidisse, sed tam diu stetisse plus miror[†]." "Note," says St. Anthony of Padua, "that ravenous birds never know how to meet together, unless when they assemble over a corpse[‡]." Those have been long dead whom heretical thoughts hover over. Foresters tell us, that, if an oak be dead at the main top, the centre of the tree is sure to be in a state either of actual or of incipient decay; and that it is not safe to use any part of it for purposes where durability or strength is required. If we mark the moral character of men foremost in promoting the false reformation, a great deal of what would otherwise seem difficult will be explained. Friar Thomas Murnar Argentinus wrote a certain calendar, in which the manners of the Lutherans were graphically described according to the zodiacal circle[§]. One may easily conceive the use he made of each sign. "It was not alone against Protestantism," says a French author, "but against pride, luxury, debauchery—against obscene poets, and libertine manners, that the wrath of the bourgeoisie and of the monks thundered during the course of the sixteenth and at the beginning of the seventeenth century, men of letters being enveloped in the same proscription[‖]." "It followeth in Fitzstephen," says Stowe, "that the plagues of London in that time were immoderate quaffing among fools, and often casualties by fire. For the first—to wit, of quaffing—it continueth as afore, or rather is mightily increased, though greatly qualified among the poorer sort, not of any holy abstinence, but of mere necessity, ale and beer being small, and wines in price above their reach." It was not among fools that immoderate quaffing became prevalent under the new colours. We should spare illustrious memories. There are certain English names to which great tenderness is due; but let protestors survey their own literary annals, without going very far back, and they will feel the force of this brute signal. In general, there is not much to edify in the portraits belonging to this gallery, though in passing through it we may find many singularities to be marked with profit. "The ignoble and impure life of Bembo," says Vallery, "forms a curious contrast to the verses he fulminated against the corruptions of Rome:—

"'Vivere qui sancte vultis, discedite Roma,
Omnia hic esse licent; non licet esse probum[¶]."

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[*] Mat. Paris, ad ann. 1213.

[†] Ep. i. 7.

[‡] Dom. iii. Quad.

[§] Bucchius, Lib. Conform. &c. 99.

[‖] Philarète Chasles, Études sur l'Espagne, 380.

[¶] Curiosit. et Anecdot. Ital.

Look at the Elizabethan heroes. Of Leicester, Dr. Heylin, the Protestant historian, says, "that he was a man so unappeaseable in his malice, and unsatiable in his lusts; so sacrilegious in his rapines, so false in his promises, and treacherous in point of trust; and, finally, so destructive of the rights and properties of particular persons, that his little finger lay far heavier on the subjects than the loins of all the favourites of the two last kings." See the consummator of English heresy herself—that ghastly beldame,—

"Dripping with dusky gore,
Furrow'd with years, yet sneering with the passion
Of vengeance; leering, too, with that of lust!"

The holy martyr, condemned by heretical judges, might have addressed each of them in the words of dying Hector,—

Ἦ σ' εὖ γιγνώσκων προτιόσσομαι, οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔμελλον
*πείσειν· ἦ γὰρ σοίγε σιδήρεος ἐν φρεσὶ θυμός**.

"It is a direful thing," says the poet, "to speak well, and act ill:"—

ἦ δεινὸν εὖ λέγουσαν ἐξαμαρτάνειν†.

The Reformers are not deficient in noble sayings, though for acting ill they seemed to have verified a promise made to them by their parent, like that of the queen of the fairies, when she said to her daughter, "Do what you will, and you shall never want an excuse." Nay, let those who still follow them please to tell us for what unjust action they or their allies, with whom they make common cause where it is a question of attacking Catholicity, do not propose an excuse? As Lord Rochester said of Lord Buckhurst, "I know not how it is, but the 'well-named' in general, and all who take their side on one question, may do what they will, yet are never in the wrong." One crime produces another crime; or, as Æschylus says, "a progeny like the mother follows."

δαίμονά τε τὸν ἄμαχον, ἀπόλεμον,
ἀνίερον θράσος,
μελαίνας μελάθροισιν ἄτας,
εἰδομέναν τοκεῦσιν‡.

Disobedience and revolt being sown at first, a harvest of general immorality was not slow to follow, when no one remembered the command, "thou shalt not yield in judgment to the opinion of the most part, to stray from the truth§." "The north wind,"

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* xxii. 356.

† Elect. 1039.

‡ Agam. 772.

§ Exod. xxiii.

says St. Bruno, "chases the clouds of our Lord; that is, apostolic men; ventus aquilo dissipat pluviam; the devil, who says he will be like the Most High, places his seat in the north; but the Lord rises, and bids the north wind fly, and adds, 'Veni, auster, perfla ortum meum, et fluent aromata illius.' There are, therefore, good winds and evil winds—good clouds and evil clouds; for the evil are the heretics, who carry, not rain, but hail; whose lightnings kill not vices, but men*." Under that wind, nations become sterile for spiritual good, fruitful for spiritual evil. The Christian virtues give way to human policy. As the French adage of the sixteenth century says,—

"Donat est mort et Restaurat dort†."

Brother Weston says, he fears that England, instead of being converted again, will lose the rest of the Catholic religion yet found there. "We have to fear," he adds, "this large scourge to punish the jealousies and animosities of our clergy, the abuses of evil missioners, the sins of the people in general, and the licentious lives of the nobility and gentry in particular, so much degenerated at this day from the piety and zeal of their Catholic ancestors‡." A little later, many of the modern school speak more boldly still, as if saying with one they liked not,—

"But 'tis as well at once to understand
You are not a moral people, and you know it
Without the aid of too sincere a poet."

Their guides, in fact, become like him so accurately represented in the lines,—

"There was the Reverend Rodomont Precision,
Who did not hate so much the sin as sinner."

"Est qui nequiter se humiliat §." "What avails the pride of hypocrites," says St. Anthony of Padua, "who disguise it under the cloak of religion ‖?" "who," as St. Augustin says, "seem to say something acute when they interpret the name of Catholic, not from the communion of the whole orb, but from the observance of all the divine precepts ¶," as if that observance were the characteristic of their sect; but, if the author of such systems has taught men to boast of a philosophy of this kind,

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* S. Brun. de Novo Mundo.

† Le Roux de Lincy, le Livre des Proverbes F.

‡ On the Rule of the Minors, ch. xii. 8.

§ Eccl. 19.

‖ Expos. Myst. in Lib. Reg.

¶ Episc. xlviii.

we may truly say with Dejanira to the messengers of Hercules, and for the same reason too :—

μάθησιν οὐ καλὴν ἐκμανθανεις *.

It is not wonderful that such generations should furnish but little game for capture by those hunters who represent the guides to truth. "Why do you not gain the friendship of this young man?" said some to Bion, who replied, "Because one cannot take soft cheese with a hook." The manners of the modern civilization, produced by the new opinions, gradually soften minds, till, in presence of some great social catastrophe, men discover that to return upward is an ascent impossible ; and then some, through a sense of shame and indignation, return to the straight austere paths of antiquity, to regain the central truth. "We see proof," says a living writer, "that the spirit of pride, in connexion with heresy, is becoming only more deeply rooted than ever. That spirit of pride is allying itself more closely than ever to other spirits that are as bad or worse than itself; that indocility is becoming more indocile ; sensuality more sensual ; insincerity more insincere ; mammon-worship more degrading and universal ; and the empire of moral cowardice more unlimited in extent and more deeply rooted in its essence. This is the downward course ; and it is while the devil has been gaining to himself in so many directions such a mighty accession of strength, that God seems in this one direction to have set Himself to secrete and collect for a better harvest some of those more wholesome natures, whose souls are revolted by the spectacle of increasing depravity." Thus have we noticed some of the signals presented on this road, which derive their force from the wants that are experienced by those who follow it. We must now proceed to observe those which, in a positive manner, indicate the way to Catholicity.

"Falsum est corruptio veri," says Tertullian, according to the old adage,—

"Qui fucum faciunt, mera quamquam oracula fundant,
Qua solet arte, horum stygius doctorque, paterque.

Those who attack Catholicity assail it with half-truths :—

"O, matter and impertinency mixed !
Reason in madness !

The clouds themselves give light. Protestantism, with all its errors and darkness, involves truth which, though broken and

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* Trach.

disjointed, may indicate the way to the centre where it is whole. Accordingly, we see that some returning from it bring with them offerings for the altar of truth, as when Porsenna, in making peace, left to the Romans all the provisions which were in his camp, which he had accumulated for the continuation of the war. Even while engaged in hostile ranks, how many Catholic truths are expressed by protestors when off their guard and forgetting the object of their sad mission! Milton, addressing a dead child, says,—

"Resolve me, then, O soul most surely bless'd,
If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear."

And again, praying for its return to life, to intercede for him, he adds,—

"But thou canst best perform it where thou art *."

A patriarch of the Calvinistic section of the religion that his university has adopted, when pressed on his death with some of his favourite sentences respecting justification by faith alone, replied to the disciple, "Ah, we must attend to the grand whole!" So Epicurus, when dying, wrote to Hermachus, saying that the pains of his body were compensated by the joy of his mind, when remembering his own inventions; of whom Cicero says, "Audio equidem philosophi vocem, Epicure; sed, quid tibi dicendum sit, oblitus es; you had denied all joys but those of the body. Nothing in this last epistle was consistent with his dogmas, ita redarguitur ipse a sese, vincunturque scripta ejus probitate ipsius et moribus †." What is it to recommend a view of the grand whole, but to retract a course of instruction which consisted in confining attention to some one or two parts? "Our cause," says the bishop of Langres, "is so conformable to sound reason and to justice, that it is impossible for our adversaries to lay down a single true principle, without the same principle, or its immediate consequences, instantly turning for us and against themselves." "The men who precede their epoch," says a profound French writer, "find in every religion a clue spread out to lead them back to Catholicism; for Catholicism is not a word, but an idea; it is not comprised in a geographical limit, but it comprises in its empire every man obedient to a law, of which the fragments are every where discovered; for what is moral never contradicts what is moral, and he who has all ideas in their true measure is Catholic. Whatever the Church pro-

* Odes.

† De Fin. ii. 30.

poses to our belief is received in part by some one sect or other, by some one nation at some one epoch, so that the obedience she demands is, in fact, only a reunion *." Once within her pale, and we have reached the mountain from which all these drift boulders, or erratic stones, were at some period or other detached. In the curious old book, entitled the "Procès entre Belial et Jésus," certain arts are detected which can be traced in those who seem to follow the example of the ancient enemy. Moses, who defends truth against him, replies to the elaborate libel which the infernal procurator produces in behalf of hell, and says to him, "Je nye les choses racontees ainsi comme sont racontees, ou les choses demandees comme sont demandees. Car la contestation aucunefois est faicte disjunctivement et aucunfois conjunctivement. Car au libelle sont demandees et racontees ensamble choses vraies et faulces †."

All Christian antiquity has observed and pointed out a mixture of truth with error in the writings and proceeding of those who attack Catholicism:—

> "They do advance their cunning more and more ;
> When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray !"

"Such," says St. Isidore, "is the cunning of heretics, that they mingle false with true things, and insert into what is salutary the virus of their error, by means of which they can pass their perversities for truths. Under the name of Catholic doctors, the heretics write their sayings that they may be read and believed. Sometimes, also, they insert their blasphemies into the books of our doctors, adulterating their doctrine, either by adding what is impious, or by suppressing what is pious ‡." "Observe," says the abbot Joachim, "quod hæretici non solum de fontibus abyssi, scilicet de philosophis sæculi, doctrinas eliciunt ; sed et de catharactis cœli, scilicet de difficultatibus sacræ Scripturæ auctoritates et quæstiones inducunt §." St. Odo makes the same observation, and says that the arrogant mix truth with falsehood, that their assertions may be more easily credited. He gives an instance, citing the words, "Si erravi, tu doce me," adding, "for Heliu said many truths with his errors ; and it is a peculiar characteristic of the arrogant to study always to be reproved for error when they know for certain that they have not erred, and to reject utterly all argument in proof of their having erred, when

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* Études sur les Idées et sur leur Union au Sein du Cathol. ii. 159. 401.

† F. 44.

‡ De Sum. Bono, iii. c. 12.

§ Abb. Joach. super Hierem. cap. xiii.

they know truly that they have erred [*]." So we find each wanderer on this road,—

ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὅμοια [†];

and, like the Cumæan sibyl, "obscuris vera involvens."

"For, as a branch, when sever'd from the tree,
Still buds, retaining fragments of the life
It once enjoy'd, though now ordain'd to die;
So error, though to perish soon, or live
In records only, still is stay'd by truth,
The while it mingles with the crowds of men."

Heresy, indeed, might find upon its path the column, like that which Theseus erected on the Isthmus of Corinth, to determine the limits of the two countries, having on the east side the words, "Here is not Peloponnesus but Ionia;" and on the west, "Here is Peloponnesus and not Ionia;" but it rejects, as too vulgar and peremptory, because clear and plain, the sure unerring words which determine the frontiers between the kingdoms of truth and error. It even seeks to conceal the pillar or to overthrow it; and then follows the posterity which involves itself each generation in greater and greater difficulties,—

——"Patriæ quoque vellet ad oras
Respicere, inque domvm supremos vertere vultus
Verum, ubi sit, nescit; tanta vertigine pontus
Fervet [‡]."

To how many wanderers now might one address the same poet's words, and say,—

"Utinam meliora videres!"

But, alas! truth itself, wrested from the root that bears it, only helps to deceive them by its beautiful foliage, and thus an old artifice becomes most fatal. The ancients had examples of an art which is in vogue with some at present. "In vain do you conceal yourself, O Zeno," said some one who saw him listening to Polemon's lectures; "we know that you glide here into our garden in order to steal our doctrines, which you then dress up after the Phœnician manner [§]." "Hi quidem," says Cicero of the Stoics, "totam ad se nostram philosophiam transtulerunt; atque, ut reliqui fures, earum rerum quas clepserunt, signa commutant; sic illi, ut sententiis nostris pro suis uterentur, nomina, tanquam rerum notas, mutaverunt [||]." He seems again to de-

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[*] Mor. in Job, xxvi.

[†] vi. 105.

[‡] Met. xi.

[§] Diog. Laertes.

[||] De Finibus, v. 25.

scribe the wind-blown wanderers of most note, when saying of Epicurus, " he took all from others, perpauca mutans, sed ita, ut ea, quæ corrigere vult, mihi quidem depravare videatur *." When Christianity arose, the same policy was evinced by the Pagan philosophers with regard to its doctrines and institutions which they had practised towards each other. The Stoics long endeavoured to resist the Christian religion by borrowing from it. As Troplong observes, " After the reign of Tiberius, the stoical philosophy was sensibly, though indirectly, influenced by Christianity †." Plotinus, the chief of the Platonicians, used to hear, during eleven years, Ammonius the Christian, a fellow-pupil of Origen. Being familiar, therefore, with the Christian doctrines, he taught many of them as lessons of philosophy under his own name, as Theodoret observes ‡. Julian, wishing to revive Paganism, recommended his pontiffs to practise charity as one of the most glorious marks of the Christian religion. Writing to Arsacius, pontiff of Galatia, he says, " What prevents the Pagan religion from resuming its splendour as we desire, is the want of virtue in those who profess it. It is clear that the impious religion of the Christians has owed its increase to its charity to the poor, and its sanctity, which we must seek to practise. Therefore, let hospitals be built, and I hereby order ample means to be furnished ; for it is disgraceful that the impious Galilæans should nourish not only their own, but our poor."

" Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey,
And kill the bees that yield it with your stings !"

Seneca, Epictetus, Plotinus, and Julian acted therefore towards the first Christians precisely as the learned men of certain Protestant sections have done in regard to the Catholic religion, borrowing from them, and then pretending to teach an independent wisdom ; for, indeed, the opponents of Catholicism generally are obliged to live by borrowing ; though some, who have made a greater progress on the frozen paths, are indignant that it should be so, complaining, with Milton, that under their banner any should be found to maintain the teaching of Antichrist. " How," he demands, " can we believe ye would refuse to take the stipend of Rome, when ye shame not to live upon the alms-basket of her prayers ? Will ye persuade us, that ye can curse Rome from your hearts, when none but Rome must teach ye to pray ?" And certainly, if the truth were such as they pertinaciously assert it to be—if the generations, till the sixteenth century, were so utterly corrupt, ignorant, and superstitious as

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* Id. i.
† De l'Influence du Christme. sur le Droit, &c. 109.
‡ Collius de Animab. Paganorum, II. i. 29.

they affirm them to have been—it ought to perplex them to say why they have adopted so much from them as they incontestably have; since their creeds and catechisms and formulas, even to the very words in which they address themselves to the Almighty, are only disjointed vestiges of Roman faith.

Protestantism, therefore, finds a positive signal to direct it to Catholicity in the truths which it has retained or borrowed from it, and in the imitations which it establishes of institutions modelled for its own use, which are incontestably of Catholic origin, even in late times; but there is still something, even in this very transfer of doctrines and practices and institutions from Catholicity to its own sect, which constitutes, to those who attentively observe it, a distinct signal; for it is obvious, that the whole is a strained and unnatural effort of ingenious men to effect impossibilities, an attempt to cultivate things which have been deprived of a congenial soil, to keep alive branches that have been cut off, which can only produce buds as long as the sap from the root continues in them. When Augustus had scruples respecting Livia, and consulted the pontiff, Tacitus compares the whole proceeding to a comedy, saying, "Et consulti per ludibrium pontifices." And, certainly, some protesting ministers, less implacable logicians than lovers of learning, have often shown themselves in the posture in which Pentheus is represented by the poet, when, wishing to imitate the Bacchanals, he asks, "Is it in my right hand or in my left that I ought to hold the thyrsis?"

πότερα δὲ θύρσον δεξιᾷ λαβὼν χερί,
ἢ τῇδε, βάκχῃ μᾶλλον εἰκασθήσομαι * ;

Men in this position, however, have many issues through the labyrinth in which they are entangled, if they would only profit by them. They say, I will maintain the supremacy of Catholic truth,—

"Et quanquam sero clypeum post vulnera sumo †."

But they are not left without warning. Do you think this to be entering the port? "Nay," will cry many with St. Augustin, "you are about to dash upon the rocks! Tendis ad portum! ad saxa properas."

"Wondrous is the temerity of the foolish," says the Venerable Bede; "or, rather, to be deplored with tears is the misery of the blind who, without any respect or fear, rescind and render void daily the things written by the apostles and prophets under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, while, on the contrary, they

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* Bacch. 941.

† Trid. i. 3.

fear to eradicate or amend what they, or men like themselves, have established by the instinct of avarice or luxury, as if it were something holy and divine; after the manner of the Pagans, who, despising the worship of the true God, venerate and adore the things which their own hearts have devised *."

"What! dost thou wish the errors to survive
That bar thee from all sympathies of good,
After the miserable interest
Thou hold'st in their protraction?"

It is even so: therefore, to find themselves not lost in loss itself, no subterfuge is omitted that can be thought calculated to give an appearance of divine solidity to their system established by human laws; times, places, and characters are all confounded and disguised—the trite proverb, "Bene concordant jura, si bene distinguantur tempora," having no force with them. As Cicero indignantly demands, on noticing similar arts, "Why may I not prove that even the Torquati were Epicureans, and accommodate them to this doctrine †?" So we may inquire, What is it that prevents them, if resolute to admit paradoxes for truths, from claiming Charlemagne and St. Louis as being of their sect? They find Protestants among the faithful in ancient times with as much accuracy of view, as would be evinced by discovering steam-engines in Virgil from the line ending,—

——— "Volat vapor ater ad auras ‡."

"Et senes et antiqui sunt in nobis multo vetustiores quam patres tui," said the false friends of Job. "Because," adds St. Odo, "all heretics separated from the universal Church are only sects that have left her, as John testifies §; yet, in order to recommend their doctrines to the minds of foolish men, they lay claim to great antiquity, and pretend that the ancient fathers and doctors of the Church were masters of their profession, and so, despising contemporary preachers, they boast with false presumption of the ancient fathers, as if they had held the things which they now preach ||." But, as St. Odo observes, "the Holy Church is, beyond all doubt, more ancient than her adversaries, as they left her, and she did not leave them or spring from them ¶." "The Reformation is wrong," says a great author, "in showing itself in the Catholic monuments which it has invaded. It appears in them mean and ridiculous. These lofty arches demand a numerous clergy, the pomp of solemnities, the chants, the pictures, the vestments, the veils, the draperies, the

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* Bedæ Epist. ad Egbertum.

† De Fin. i. 10.

‡ vii. 485.

§ 1 Joan. ii. 19.

|| S. Odonis, Abb. Clun. Mor. in Job, lib. xii.

¶ Id. lib. xxiii.

lace, the silver, the gold, the lamps, the flowers, and the incense of altars. Protestantism may boast for ever of its return to primitive Christianity; the Gothic churches reply that it has denied its fathers. The Christian architects of these wonders were a different kind of men from the children of Luther and Calvin*." As Nauplius kindles false fires on the promontory of Caphareus, in order to make the Greeks suppose it to be a port, amidst whose rocks so many of their vessels, home-returning, perished, so these guides deceive their countrymen, by holding out lights from the towers of the Establishment, to make them mistake it for the true harbour, where they could have rest and safe anchorage.

But how many facilities for escape the while from such delusions! How many issues through which the effulgence of the central truth can be distinguished from all false fires! Observe these men, so obstinate in their attempts to substitute fiction for reality, and you will perceive that it is not they who can render the forest here impassable; for, to notice but a few of these breaks, they can find an opening for themselves, as for others, first, in the shame and regret with which their own history inspires them. Alas! alas! our rash faults

" Make trivial price of serious things we have,
Not knowing them, until we know their grave."

Many who tread this road in England might now find a representative of their state in the fabled Hercules, when the insane paroxysm had left him partially restored, and he exclaims, " What! am I the murderer of my spouse too ?" " Yes," replies Amphitryon, " thy hand did it;" whereupon he exclaims, *αἰαῖ· στεναγμῶν γάρ με περιβάλλει νέφος*, " a cloud of desolation encompasses me. Did I overthrow my own palace? When did this transport seize on me? where began my ruin †?"

" Vitaret cœlum Phaëton, si viveret, et quos
Optarat stulte tangere nollet equos ‡."

Attempts, of course, were made by clever men to represent past events as different from what they really were,

" And with the falsehood of their poisonous lips
They breathed on the enduring memory
Of sages and of saints a brief eclipse,"

saying that they

" Bade murd'rous priests the sov'reign frown contemn,
And with unhallow'd crosier bruise the crown."

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* Chateaub. Mém. † Herc. Furens, 1144. ‡ Ovid. Trist. i.

Swelling periods were composed, great ingenuity was evinced, "sed res se tamen sic habet," as Cicero says, "ut nimis imperiosi philosophi sit vetare meminisse[*]." What is deplored may have been done long ago; but the evil consequences reign to-day with as much vital energy as ever; "for time," as Pindar says, "can never make undone things done justly or unjustly"—

—— *τῶν δὲ πεπραγμένων*
ἐν δίκᾳ τε καὶ παρὰ δίκαν
ἀποίητον οὐδ' ἂν
χρόνος[†].

"It is said," observes Cicero, addressing Verres, "that you are often heard to complain of being miserably oppressed, not by your own crimes, but by those of your people? But wherefore accuse others, when all who served you were obedient to you[‡]?" Why does Protestantism accuse its children, who only followed its principles or its impulses? Its most discerning friends, indeed, must feel the difficulty in this respect of their position; for if they read the praises of the ancients, if they read the praise even of the men of their own family, as Cicero says, they will find no one praised for what is purely the result of Protestation. If they will extol its merit as existing in itself, "non elogia monumentorum id significant[§]." Nor brass, nor stone, nor parchment, bears example; whereas history, impartially viewed, demonstrates the immense glory and the practical benefits of Catholicism; so that even the "well-named" will often say of it, in the lines of the poet,—

"Ille quidem majora fide quoque gessit, et orbem
Implevit meritis, quod mallem posse negare[||]."

It happens thus with him as with Balaam, the over-ruled prophet, who blessed where he thought to curse; and, like Goethe, he will say that he fears this would be the case still oftener were he to stay in such domains much longer. Then, again, some assuredly will be drawn by sympathy with men who have so many studies, views, and tastes similar to their own. "Magnum vinculum," says Cicero, "quod iisdem studiis semper usi sumus[¶]." They will be drawn by the force of the very words that fall from their own lips: for though, to apply Cicero's expressions to our subject, the disciple of this school may use that most sacred name of Church or Catholic, "ut aliter sentiret, verborum tamen ipsorum pondus sustinere non posset[**]." They will be tempted at last to repeat the poet's words,—

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[*] De Fin. ii. 32.
[†] Ol. 2.
[‡] In Ver. ii. lib. ii.
De Fin. ii. 35.
[||] Met. xii.
[¶] Pro Ligario.
[**] Id.

"Nursed in the shades by freedom's lenient care,
Shall I the rigid sway of fortune own?
Taught by the voice of pious truth, prepare
To spurn an altar and adore a throne?"

They have also an opening to truth in the dissatisfaction, not to say horror, excited by those still living around them, who adopt the new principle to a greater extent, whose fearful logic compels some, at least, sooner or later to hear with complacency a voice like that of the poet, saying,—

"Inamabile regnum
Desere; teque refer cœli melioris ad auras*."

Here, on this road, men catholically moved find themselves, like Touchstone in the forest of Arden with Audrey and his goats, "as the most capricious poet honest Ovid was among the Goths," and have as good reason to say with him, "A man may, if he were of a fearful heart, stagger in his attempt; for here we have no temple but the wood, no music but the jarring winds, no assembly but horn-beasts." I would gladly have them see their company anatomized, that they might take a measure of their own judgment wherein so obstinately they cling to fellowship. If there be any man admirable in their sense, they perceive that he is generally regarded as out of his place, even in the same country with the "well-named." They hear it said, plainly enough, that the sooner he leave it the better. They hear him called a Roman, as Livy says of Timastheus of Lipari, on occasion of his manifesting respect for religion, "Romanis vir similior quam suis †." Continually they are thrown amongst "brethren" who say that they are enemies to their whole system. Hear how they are addressed at the present day by men on their own side. "It may sound paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true, that with the disciples of the Oxford Tract School we have no manner of controversy. Their principles, logical and ethical, are so totally different from our own, that we feel it as impossible to argue with them as with beings of a different species. There may be worlds, say some philosophers, where truth and falsehood change natures—where the three angles of a triangle are no longer equal to two right angles, and where a crime of unusual turpitude may inspire absolute envy. We are far from saying that the gentlemen above-mentioned are qualified to be inhabitants of such a world; but we repeat that we have just as little dispute with them as if they were. The powers of speculation of these gentlemen are either so much above our own, or so much below them—their notions of right so transcendantly ridiculous, or so transcendantly

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* Met. iv.

† Hist. v. 28.

sublime—that there can be nothing in common between us. Thousands, we know, are ready to resolve the mystery of their conduct by saying, 'Surely these men are either great knaves or great fools,' but, in the exercise of that charity which hopeth all things, we will not assume the former; and in the exercise of that charity which believeth all things, we will not assume the latter. We regard them simply as an unexplained phenomenon; we stare at them as at a new comet, devoutly hoping at the same time that they may be found to move in a highly hyperbolical trajectory, and that, having swept across our system, they will vanish and return no more[*]." It is not merely of private men that they have to sustain the thrusts. The government, by the pen of its Whig minister, pursuing them as if with the sword in their reins, holds them up to the indignation of their nation as "the unworthy sons of the Church of England," for teaching what their liturgical book recommends. The same minister denounces "the mummeries of their superstition," and reminds them that for the same teaching they are now openly reprehended by their Bishop of London; while, in fact, their whole establishment seems endued with a voice to say to them with shuddering,—

"Into what dangers would you lead me,
That you would have me seek into myself
For that which is not in me?"

You complain of such attacks; you complain of your treatment by the people, by the parliament, by the ministers of state, by your own bishops. One can understand your sentiments of shame when the state says to you, like Prospero to Ariel,—

——— "Thou shalt be as free
As mountain winds; but then exactly do
All points of my command."

But can you justly complain—you who set out by sanctioning the evil in its principle from the beginning?—

"Tunc decuit metuisse tuis; nunc sera querelis
Haud justis assurgis, et irrita jurgia jactas[†]."

δόξει τις ἀμαθεῖ σοφὰ λέγων οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖν[‡].

Say things wise to an ignorant man, or things holy and divine to one of the "well-named" school, and you will be considered mad. Old herbalists will tell you that the leaves of the plant

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[*] Edinb. Review, April, 1843.
[†] Æn. x. 94.
[‡] Bacch. 484.

called hound's tongue, if laid under the feet, will keep the dogs from barking at you, and that it derives its name from its tying the tongues of hounds! There is no such specific against the clamour that rises here. Actæon-like, these men are worried to death by hounds of their own breeding—such are the conjunctions of heresy,—

"Non bene junctarum discordia semina rerum *."

Ah, cease then, they will hear, the vain effort to rear Catholic flowers where a new element has turned mould to stones. "A better soil shall give ye thanks." "Sit hoc discrimen inter gratiosos cives atque fortes," says the Roman orator, "ut illi vivi fruantur opibus suis; horum, etiam mortuorum (si quisquam hujus imperii defensor mori potest), vivat auctoritas immortalis †."

Upon this road of the four winds men have a wide issue, in a sense of the unreal character which belongs to all attempts at combining Catholic forms with the principles of the reform, which will ever be found to render them as concave as a covered goblet or a worm-eaten nut. In art, in philosophy, in morals, all such efforts will be in vain; and those at least, like Goethe, who pride themselves on disliking "a bare and hollow name, and on being the mental enemies of mere verbal sounds," will have additional motives for turning from them. "Glorious hope, radiant with immortality, invests," says Frederick Schlegel, "every picture of the Christian era with a bright harmony of colours, and fixes our attention by its clear comprehension of heavenly things, and an elevated spiritual beauty which we justly term Christian." The evil winds that blow upon this road have covered this sky with a cold rack, and, as it were, changed the climate; so that, when transplanted to the soil through which it passes, all flowers hang their heads; all whom we meet wear an expression of discouragement, or else of a certain reckless buffoonery, alternating with sadness. "The serious and noble philosophy which is discoverable in the works of Dürer and Leonardo cannot be reared," says Schlegel, "without the pale of Catholicism. Every effort to produce such fruits will be in vain, unless the painter be endowed with earnest religious feeling, genuine devotion, and immortal faith. Fancy, sporting with the symbols of Catholicism, uninspired by that love which is stronger than death, will never attain to exalted Christian beauty." It is the same with efforts to raise again the high moral life. It is not necessary to allude to the imitations by which there is only a desire to surprise or amuse the frivolous; as when a certain rich Protestant, having built what he called a

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* Met. i.

† Pro Cor. Balbo.

hermitage, in his park, advertised for a hermit, stating that there would be a good salary, and that the person chosen would only have to show himself in it during the two days every week when strangers were admitted to the grounds; but we may appeal to the efforts of grave and ingenious men who really seek to prove that they can possess, under the reformed banner, what they admire in Catholicity. Buildings, at the first glance, like monasteries, may be constructed, and for a little while some few persons induced to inhabit them; but the soul, and consequently even the external expression, will be wanting; so that a stranger being admitted will feel impressed with a sense of the ridiculous as if he had been witnessing a play of Aristophanes, and, without intending to reproach any one, he will exclaim, on passing out of the threshold,—

> "Quid, si quis vultu torvo ferus et pede nudo
> Exiguæque togæ simulet textore Catonem,
> Virtutemne repræsentet moresque Catonis?
> O imitatores, servum pecus, ut mihi sæpe
> Bilem, sæpe jocum, vestri movere tumultus!"

Voices unkind, uncharitable perhaps, but still truthful in a certain sense, on all sides will be heard, like those of Theseus, exclaiming, "We will be caught no more by your hypocrisy. Boast away; deceive men with your fasts; follow the track of Orpheus; frequent the mysteries of Bacchus; feed on the smoke of science; you are unmasked. Fly such men."

> *ἤδη γυν αὔχει καὶ δι' ἀψύχου βορᾶς*
> *σίτοις καπήλευ', 'Ορφέα τ' ἄνακτ' ἔχων*
> *βάκχευε, πολλῶν γραμμάτων τιμῶν καπνούς·*
> *ἐπεί γ' ἐλήφθης. τοὺς δέ τοιούτους ἐγὼ*
> *φεύγειν προφωνῶ πᾶσι **.

And in fact, discarding all malice in the deepest recesses of the heart, on hearing imitators of this kind speak beautifully on such themes as occupy the Catholic schools, one is prompted to utter something like what Cicero said of Zeno—"You, as an acute man, are only arguing a cause, repugnante naturâ;" or, as he says of Aristo, "gravitas in eo non fuit; scripta sanè et multa et polita; sed nescio quo pacto auctoritatem oratio non habet. If these real Platonicians," asks Cicero, "and they who heard them, were to return to life, and to speak with you!" If the real monk, the true Catholic, and those trained by them were to return, ah, then indeed there would be a very different impression visible.

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* Hippolyt. 950.

——— "But ye, who must lament
The death of those that made this world so fair,
Cannot recall them now."

And besides, how wanting in the simple, cheerful majesty of truth are men who only use it in order to prop up some tottering fabric of human error! Are they constrained to acknowledge the defects and evils of such an establishment? "It is best," they say, "to pass over them in silence,"—

μὴ κινεῖν τὸ κακὸν εὖ κείμενον.

Is it impossible to carry out, as they say, their views fully? They conceal them from the people. "Cum ergo talia sentirent Platonici," says St. Augustin, "neque tanta essent auctoritate apud populos ut credenda persuaderent, elegerunt occultare sententiam*." Catholicism rejects such policy. John III., king of Sweden, had entertained for a long time the unhappy idea of wishing to have a Catholic priest in Sweden who should pretend to be a Lutheran; but the pope's nuncio would never consent to grant such a request, saying, "It is quite certain, that at no time, and in no country, was the Catholic religion ever introduced in the manner that your Majesty proposes†." When James II. proposed to embrace the Catholic faith, and remain for a while in the Anglican communion, in hopes of finding a better opportunity to declare himself, and draw his subjects with him, Father Simon assured him that the pope had not the power to grant such a dispensation; as the Church would never permit evil to be done that good might result from it. Does an occasion at length present itself for professing, in despite of power, the truths that such imitators have been selecting as fundamental? At that decisive moment they decline acting; they are for delay or for silence. But how disgraceful is it, to see what is best, and, like a tragic Medea, to follow obstinately what appears the worst! They wait for inspirations, and they reap only more doubts than before:—

——— "Deus at dubitabile pectus
Sub titubante fide refugo contemnit honore."

They say, like Asellius to Cassius, "If we could only put off, defer it to another winter!" or they act like Tigellinus, who, in a pressing emergency, asked time for shaving his beard. As Peter of Blois says, "Inconsulta carnis affectio, proditorie blandiens, et amicabiliter fallens, in devium te retorquet: dum a pusillanimitate spiritus conturbatus, primitias religionis et introitum sanctitatis abhorres. At tu, si jugo Domini assuescere

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* Ep. lvi. ad Diosc.

† Theiner, 145.

velis, factus tanquam vitula Ephraim, docta diligere trituram, affectabis quod times; capies quod vereris." Not so these men, to whom the reproach of Northumberland is applicable,—

"But lords, we hear this fearful tempest sing,
Yet seek no shelter to avoid the storm;
We see the wind sit sore upon our sails,
And yet we strike not, but securely perish."

"The change," they say, "when it took place, was deplorable; but now we cannot avoid following it,"—

"Turpe quidem contendere erat, sed cedere visum
Turpius."

Yet, assuredly, as another poet says,—

——— "Thus to persist
In doing wrong extenuates not the wrong,
But makes it much more heavy."

Such are the men borrowing from Catholicity who seek, by learning and genius, to prop up edifices resting on sand. Can we wonder that their end should resemble that of the giant Polydamas, who, while his friends fled out of the crumbling grotto, thought that he could support the rocks, as if his strength could bear up such a burden, and who perished under the fallen mountain: a warning to all who confide too much in their own force, as remarks Pausanias, who relates the significative tradition *?

Thus does the positive signal, constituted by the truths with which the errors of Protestantism are mixed, partake still, in part, of the same negative character which belonged to the signals which we passed before; so that it has for all observers a twofold meaning. There is still a craving after truth in its fulness, in its purity; and, as Alanus Magnus says,—

"Nescit homo quid dulcis habet dulcedinis esca,
Qui nunquam didicit quid foret ipsa fames †."

Another issue, however, wholly direct to the centre, from these wind-blown paths is formed by the learning which not unfrequently belongs to those who have been left upon them by the guides of their childhood; for it is not to all such men of erudition that we can address the poet's words,—

"Sit spes fallendi, miscebis sacra profanis ‡."

Pagan authors, poets, historians, antiquarians, and biblical

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* Lib. vi. † Alan. Lib. Parab. ‡ Hor. Ep. i. 16.

scholars will be cited by some with a very different object from that which makes such stores a profitable commodity in the trade of the "well-named," of whom it may so often be truly said, "the wiser the waywarder." "It is instructive," says one, recoiling from them, "to find traditions, which at first sight appear questionable, confirmed by fresh evidence for them in a writer like St. Ephrem, whose language was for many centuries unknown to almost all writers in other parts of the Church." In the sacred Scriptures, of course, the learned are presented with innumerable signals pointing to the centre. How they should mistake, for instance, those formed even by the mere ceremonial and beauty of Catholic worship while reading the Bible, in which God gives such minute directions to effect a similar object for a similar end*, would be inexplicable, if we did not know that sacred learning itself becomes for some men a present, like that of Pallas,—

δισσούς σταλαγμοὺς αἵματος Γοργοῦς ἄπο,

two drops ;—of which one is a mortal poison, the other a sovereign remedy,—

τὸν μὲν θανάσιμον, τὸν δ' ἀκεσφόρον νόσων†.

Vain and fatal thoughts some attempt to justify from the sacred text, malice or the prejudice of early habits blinding them, and knowing not the sacraments of God ; while to others the divine arrows are sharp ; that is, as Rupertus observes, "The words of God quibus confixa corda illorum qui fuerant inimici credunt et acquiescunt veritati et cadunt adorando te, facti amici‡." The very cautions and distinctions, therefore, of the Catholic Church, respecting the use of the Scriptures, constitute a signal for judicious men, who must observe how many preceding them have perished by not heeding such warnings ; as Origen, whose works were so dear to the holy fathers, being employed by them in combatting the heretics, and yet whose end was by Christian antiquity considered so uncertain§ ; and Tertullian, of whom St. Jerome says, "Nihil amplius dico, quam Ecclesiæ hominem non fuisse." Observing, then, that self-taught theology is involved in the same danger as every thing else without submission to the authority of the Church, some of the "well-named," if learned, are sooner or later drawn to reflect, by their very studies undertaken to confirm their error, on the inadequacy of all human acquirements to secure the chief good of man.

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* Exod. xxviii. † Ion, 1005.

‡ De Vict. Verb. Dei, xi. 28.

§ Collius de Animab. Pag. II. lib. iv. c. 10, 17.

John III., king of Sweden, was conversant with the learning of antiquity when Father Possevin said to him, with such effect, "Let your Majesty remember the words of St. Augustin, that without the Catholic Church a heretic can have every thing excepting salvation; he can have honour—secundum Ecclesiasticum ordinem; he can have sacraments; he can sing alleluja; he can respond, Amen; he can hold in his hands the Gospel; he can have faith, and preach it in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but never, unless in the Catholic Church, can he find or possess eternal salvation[*]." As for the common accusations by their party against the Church, so far as the interests of erudition and taste are concerned, learning conducts many, who cannot wholly throw delusions off, to feel disgust, as if they heard the vulgar attack the monarch of sublimest song, and to say with Theocritus,—

καὶ μοισᾶν ὄρνιχες ὅσοι ποτὶ Χῖον ἀοιδὸν
Ἀντία κοκκύζοντες, ἐτώσια μοχθίζοντι[†].

Another issue, again, is formed by the natural virtues which often belong to the wanderers who are involved in the obscurity and tempests of this unhappy road. "I know of nothing more deplorable," says one of them, "than when just and noble ideas are enlisted in the service of error[‡]." That is, indeed, an excellent observation by one who furnishes an instance in himself of what he laments; but it is no less true, that just and noble ideas, just and noble sentiments, can facilitate the advance of men who are in error to a recognition of the truth of Catholicity. St. Jerome says to St. Augustin, "Te quoque ipsum orare non dubito, ut inter nos contendentes veritas vincat; non enim tuam quæris gloriam sed Christi. Cumque tu viceris, et ego vincam, si meum errorem intellexero; et è contrario me vincente, tu superas[§]." With such dispositions, the centre can hardly be long quite unattainable. Sir John Maundeville, speaking of the Yle Gynosophe, says, "Alle be it theyse folk have not the articles of oure feythe as wee have, nathless for here gode feythe naturelle and for hire gode entent, I trowe fulle that God loveth hem." Mystic issues will be made for such men; but, besides, natural openings also are multiplied for them, arising out of the very tenor of their lives. You who wander here love many things in common with Catholics. On many occasions, I believe, you would act like them—"non quæritur autem," you will perceive, as Cicero says, "quid naturæ tuæ consentaneum sit, sed quid disciplinæ;

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[*] In Serm. sup. Gestis Emeriti Donat.

[†] ζ.

[‡] Guizot.

[§] Ep. xi. tom. ii. Augustini.

ita enim vivunt quidam, ut eorum vitâ refellatur oratio; atque ut ceteri existimantur dicere melius quam facere, sic mihi videntur facere melius quam dicere*." One might often address these wind-blown wayfarers in words like those of Socrates to Glaucon and Adimantes, after hearing their sermons: "Children of an illustrious Father, well was it said that you were issued from a divine race; for there must of necessity be something divine in you; if, after what you have said, you are not practically of that persuasion—which you evidently are not, since your manners and conduct prove that your own discourses have not influenced your life†." The justice and natural virtues, like the truths of Protestants, only prove that they are constrained by the very nature of things to be Protestant only by halves; for, as might be shown in Socratic language, were they to adopt and carry out the principle to its whole extent, saying with Parolles, "simply the thing I am shall make me live," instead of making it yield at times to a Catholic purpose, they would be absolutely savage or insane. "A troop of robbers," says the philosopher, "or any other society of that nature, could not succeed, if the members who compose it were to violate all the laws of justice towards each other, as injustice produces dissensions, and renders men incapable of accomplishing any thing in common. It is clear that they must observe some forms of justice which hinder them from injuring themselves while injuring others, and that it is these very forms which enable them to succeed: they are only unjust by halves; for, if wholly unjust, they would be absolutely impotent‡." In like manner, a society composed of the "well-named" that would practically discard all Catholic forms, and doctrines, and rules, renouncing the virtues which depend on their observance, would be condemned, by the nature of things, to impossibilities and dissolution. Balmes observes, that "the positive doctrines of Protestantism, as, for instance, those which deny the utility of good works and free will, are rejected by the instinct of civilization. European manners," he says, "have rejected with disdain these fundamental doctrines of the Reformers. Legislation has not adopted them for base; civilization has allowed them no influence. Neither governments, nor tribunals, nor schools, nor families have followed this horrible teaching of Luther, which would have substituted, for the civilization and dignity of Europe, barbarism and the abjection of the Mahometan populations§." Thus do the virtues of wandering men, by producing inconsistent results, as well as by constituting direct avenues, form an opening through which those who have

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* De Fin. ii. 25.

† De Repub. ii.

‡ Id. i.

§ c. xi.

been captured by error can escape to the liberty of truth. For these, too, one may then give one's word. Our kindred, though they be long ere they are wooed, they are constant, being won.

In fine, travellers through this sad region are not left without some knowledge of Catholicism, furnished either by the instrumentality of friends, or by the public conduct of the faithful in regard to them; so that each may say,—

> "If circumstances lead me, I will find
> Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
> Within the centre."

The instrumentality of acquaintances, or of personal affection, it is true, proves generally insufficient; as, in early times, when the having a Christian friend and Christian preceptor did not avail Plotinus. Moved neither by the lessons of the Christian philosopher, Ammonius, nor by the friendship of Origen, nor by the example of his own disciples, who passed to Christ from the schools of Plato, Plotinus refrained from professing himself a disciple of the fisherman. Modern times abound with instances of the same inefficacy, even where Protestants are not so unhappy as to have for friends professing truth only worldly, tepid Catholics, like those whom the curate of St. Roch used to call Easter Christians. "The dean of St. Leonhard, Dumeix," says Goethe, "was the first Catholic priest with whom I had come into close contact. He was a clear-sighted man, and gave me beautiful and sufficient explanations of the faith, usages, and external and internal relations of the oldest Church." This did not prevent him from remaining what he was before he knew him, appearing to prefer the god of Olympus to the God of the cross. "I have no sympathy with the Romish Church," says an English popular writer, "although I acknowledge, as most men do, some esteemed friends among the followers of its creed*." But, not to dwell on the singularity of a religion with which men are heard to declare that they have no sympathy, while proclaiming as loudly that most of them have esteemed friends belonging to it, though, one might suppose, the natural consequence of hating ecclesiam malignantium would be a resolution like the prophet's, who said, "I will not sit down with its members"—et cum impiis non sedebo,—there can be no difficulty in perceiving, that friendship, the worship of which, of itself, has limits, might sometimes assume an office that entitles it to be followed beyond them, and even usque ad aras. Struck with that resolution of the Catholic, who says so often, like Demetrius, "Disparage not the faith thou dost not know, lest to thy

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* Pref. to "Barnaby Rudge."

peril thou abide it dear ;" or, like Tiresias, " In spite of what you say, I will worship thus,"—

> κού θεομαχήσω σῶν λόγων πεισθεὶς ὕπο *.

and who may add, with no less justice,—

> " Nec moveor ; quod pars hominum rarissima clausos
> Non aperit sub luce oculos, et gressibus errat."

some of the " well-named" at times will wish, after all, that they could themselves resemble such a friend, and with him, like the companions of Diomede, find an end of wandering :—

> " Per patulas rimas Sol lucens intrat in ædem,
> Corda per auriculas dogma docentis init."

To his discourse of sweet composure they attend,—

> ——— " finemque rogant erroris †."

To mark some stray inquirers, contending in the race in which all run, with Catholics who give them counsel, might recall the irresolution of Atalanta, when she sees Hippomenes :—

> ——— " et dubitat superari an vincere malit ‡."

Come, do you think that truth has no distinctive voice? Can virtue hide itself? Graces will appear, and there 's an end. Nor should we overlook the impression that may so often be excited by the general constancy and unassuming fidelity of the whole body of the Catholic people, seeming even by their reserve—for fair faith has few words—to correspond so exactly with the loftiest notion that the human mind can form of that " congregation" which the Psalmist implores God to remember, as having possessed it from the beginning §, which age after age utters with one voice, that answer of the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasses to the other tribes—" God keep us from any such wickedness, that we should revolt from the Lord, and leave off following his steps, by building an altar to offer holocausts, and sacrifices, and victims beside the altar of the Lord our God, which is erected before his tabernacle ||." The distinctions of men, saying " our Church, professors of every religious denomination, pupils of different creeds," as if recognizing the beauty of indifference to all separations,—the tolerance of that liberalism which seems to pronounce in favour of Solomon's compliance to enable his wives to practise their

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* Bacch. 325. † Met. xiv. 10. ‡ x. 8.
§ Ps. lxxiii. || Josue xxii.

false religions in defiance of the judgment passed upon it by the Almighty*, can hardly succeed in shutting out all view of the central truth in Catholicity, when some observe the steady walk of those who pass through the forest as if in a luminous procession, having their face towards Rome, and their back to that confusion which Babylon represents. "To separate herself altogether from those who refuse to be hers," says a learned writer, "as it was the duty and the privilege of the typical, so is it also of the Gospel Israel†." "Behold, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations‡." The very isolation in which the Catholic Church presents itself to all observers, the traditionary caution and watchfulness which all who manifest a real and lively attachment to her evince, in regard to the multitudes who are separated from her communion, may be said, in fine, to constitute a silent signal, like a solemn hand stretched out at the meeting of cross-roads, to point to truth as existing within the inviolable centre, where Catholicism sits enthroned for ever. Those who can be moved by this attraction are men, I am aware it will be said, whose confined views do not embrace the vast "humanitary" horizon—men retrograde, as a great author says, "attached to a morality which causes laughter; obsolete morality, fit, at the most, for narrow minds in the infancy of society. Other views are required by the true, improved Protestant philosophy, which is to accelerate the progress of the human race, and bind together all members of the one great human family;" by which is meant, the family of unbelievers; not, perhaps, so extensive in its generic character as is supposed. But the hollowness of such pretensions to liberality will be detected by some; for, in fine, there is no necessary connexion between an expansive benevolence and the arbitrary assumption, that there is no such thing as certainty in regard to religious truth, and that all men are involved in the same ignorance. There is nothing illiberal in the Catholic faith, which teaches how all men can arrive at certainty, while, at the same time, inculcating a love for all men, whether they have attained to it or not. At all events, an attentive observer will not fail to recognise the great facts and realities of human life which explain why the isolation of the Catholic Church in the world should be viewed as a proof of its divinity. Let us pause, then, for a moment before this signal, and mark the issue to which it points.

"Avoid heretics; for their words as arrows wound hearts." The comment is of St. Ephrem§; the precept is of the Catholic Church. This is what causes her to be hated in the world, of

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* 3 Kings xxi.

† Seager, Letter to a Friend.

‡ Numb. xxiii.

§ Adortationes.

which she is not; but this is also what causes her to be seen through every dusky winding of the perilous labyrinth. "Avoid heretics," says Catholicism, "though you may think you stand immoveable, enlightened by the sun of truth." The cameleon does not instantly change its colour with its place. It is only after some time that it assumes the tint of surrounding objects. "Passing by Nîmes," says Sister de Changy, "the only lodging that could be found for our blessed mother was in the house of a Huguenot. She refused to enter it, saying, she preferred lodging in a little wine-shop, the mistress of which said, on her entering it, 'Madame, we are poor; but we are Catholics.' 'Blessed be God,' she replied, 'that you are so rich in your poverty as to have purity of faith*!'" To express the orders of a barbarian in the Greek tongue was thought a crime worthy of death. That no one had ever preached heresy in their language was the boast of some ancient European races, which, in the Bretons, have still a representative. "But will you not dispute with us upon religion?—will you not, however sure you may pretend to be, argue the question with us?" exclaim the separated wanderers;—

"For truth can never be confirm'd enough,
Though doubts did ever sleep."

The Catholic answer is of all times, "We have no such custom, nor the Church of God." "Never dispute with him who changed stones into temptations," said St. Catherine of Sienna, "nor with those who are of his college. Unless upon the Rock of Ages, there can be nothing built that will endure." This knowledge renders useless all such proposed discussion. "Quid enim prosunt," says St. Aldhelm, "bonorum operum emolumenta, si extra Catholicam gerantur Ecclesiam, etiam si aliquis actualem rigidæ conversationis regulam sub disciplina cœnobii solerter exerceat, aut certe cunctorum mortalium contubernia declinans in squalida solitudine remotus contemplativam anachoreseos peragat vitam†?" "Et, ut brevis sententiæ claustello cuncta concludantur, frustra de fide Catholica inaniter gloriatur, qui dogma et regulam Sancti Petri non sectatur. Fundamentum quippe Ecclesiæ et firmamentum fidei principaliter in Christo et sequenter in Petro collocatum nequaquam ingruentibus tempestatum turbinibus nutabundum vacillabit‡." You hang your arguments, or rather calumnies, upon the brambles, in hopes that they who pass may find them; and truly then the tree yields bad fruit. You invite to disputation those who cannot call in question the authority of the Church, and marvel why

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* De Changy, Mém. de Ste Jeanne de Chantal, chap. 24.

† Id. Epist. ad Geruntium.

‡ S. Aldh. de Laudibus Virginitatis.

you are answered not again. "But that's all one," as Phœbe says; "omittance is no quittance;" and even the wisdom of the ancients would admire the custom of Catholicity in declining the vain challenge; for it said,—

πάντι λόγῳ λόγος ἴσος ἀντίκειται[*].

"If we oppose to his long discourse," says Socrates, speaking of a sophist, "another discourse as long, in favour of what we believe, then he will make a second after ours: and when will such disputation have an end[†]?" When a Catholic would speak, the polemical theorite cries, "'Tis no matter, I shall speak as much as thou afterwards." Would you protract debate like this? But one should hear all things. Yes, but to endeavour all one's days to fortify the mind with such discourse is to spend so much in armour, that sometimes the event proves one has nothing left to defend. "Whether wonder or pity should most prevail," says St. Robert d'Arbriselle, "I cannot say, on seeing the cunning flexures of the ancient serpent so imposing on the minds of Catholics as to make them esteem it not indecorous to engage in a kind of gladiatorial contest of words, on the holy decrees of faith, with heretics, at which the spectators and combatants are equally injured, when they behold called in question as doubtful the most certain things." Quid enim a fidei hostibus, nisi hostile sperandum est? "An heretical man, after one or two admonitions, avoid," says St. Paul. He does not tell us to dispute, but to correct. What, then, are the humble myrtles in the desert to do, if the cedars in Libanus are to refrain? "Discede," he adds, "ab hujusmodi." He does not say, "Verbis contendite et hos oppugna;" but, "Discede." Whoever recommends disputation with a heretic professes himself to be more prudent than Paul and Timothy. They who think that, by such contention, the mind of heretics may be converted are clearly deceived; for, as St. Chrysostom says, "they may be confounded, but they will not be amended." The more wood that is heaped upon the fire, the more the flames will burn; and so, the more that such minds hear of truth, the more are they impelled to defend and cover their once-conceived error. As no one can distinguish the form or colour of things in darkness, unless he recur to light, sic nunquam erudiri poterit hæreticus, nisi prius ecclesiasticæ et modestiæ et disciplinæ capiatur amore. "Disputation never unites schismatics, but only stimulates heretics to more malice," as Sisinius said to the emperor. Logomachies are born from calumny; they grow up with strife and contention; and, at length, either vanish away in vanity, or grow childish again in the revival of hatred. The heretic will never allow that he

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[*] Sext. Philos.

[†] De Repub.

is conquered. Neque se fatebitur victum; suis enim technis rimam tandem inveniet, qua effugere possit, in alios peritiores rejiciendo negotium. No one of experience will dispute with a heretic respecting the faith; but to speak of hope, and charity, and other spiritual gifts, of the creation, and government of things, and in these to relate the wonders of God, is permitted to every one when he pleases. But heretics will always endeavour that the waters of Siloe, which flow with silence, should be made waters of contradiction. Dispute not, then, with a heretic; for through illicit and imprudent disputations the virulent crop of heresy grows abundant on all sides, placing darkness for light, and light for darkness. Be, for a time, sicut homo non audiens et non habens in ore suo redargutiones. Mark the sentence of the Lord: "Attendite a falsis seu pseudoprophetis." He does not advise controversy. "Attendite ergo, non contendite." Truly, he adds, "illud vehementer admiror quod deplorati homines et ab ecclesia jampridem relegati, læsæ divinæ majestatis et humanæ rei, pacis conditiones proponere audeant his, a quibus prostrati et supplices humi toto corpore procumbentes veniam implorare debuerant. It is sufficient, however, to know, that they who trouble the Church will be judged, as we read in the Galatians, qui conturbat vos, portabit judicium quicunque est ille*."

The historian is found to give the same advice as the theologian. "Quand je considere," says Pierre Matthieu, whose words have a force that can hardly be conveyed by a translation, "le peu de fruict que ces disputes ont apporté en divers endroicts de l'Europe, et que l'Escripture saincte est l'arene sur laquelle chacun estime qu'il luy soit permis de combattre, il me prend envie de desirer quelque severe deffence de la traicter si vulgairement.—De ce que chacun y veut faire l'entendu, il advient que d'une mesme fleur le fidelle comme l'abeille y trouve du miel, le rebelle comme l'araignee en tire du poison, et plusieurs se sont abestis sur la beste de l'Apocalypse†." Thus remarkable and striking, thus conformable to the judgment of ancient philosophers and of Christian historians, are the instructions of the Catholic Church; and no less so are the customs and practice growing out of these instructions, which distinguish those who adhere to her communion—

> "Sæpius in vico pueros pugnare videmus
> Quam validos homines queis solet esse vigor."

The faithful will not speak a word. There is between their will

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* Robert. Arboricens. Opus quadripartitum super Compescenda Hæreticorum Petulantia.

† Hist. de Hen. IV. lib. iv.

and all offences a guard of patience. But stay a little while, and you will find that the secrets of nature have not more gift in taciturnity. Catholics are like the Trojans,

> "Assueti longo muros defendere bello *,"

and their spiritual lines of defence resemble those ancient walls which are said to contain a monumental epitome of the history of the wonderful city which they enclose, there not being an invasion of error, from that of the Arian in early, to that of the Lutheran in later, times, which is not chronicled in these silent records. But age after age they follow advice like that of Æneas,

> —— "Non obvia ferre
> Arma viros ; sed castra fovere †."

"I will be as brief as possible in reply to you," says Lanfranc to the heretic Berengerarius, "in talibus enim næniis, nollem vitam deterere, si populum Dei antiquam permitteres pacem habere ‡." Catholics seek not logomachies and victories. They have still higher interests to attend to, and complaints have been heard when even the conversion of opponents was combined with a neglect of those interests ; "for," says St. Isidore, "quidam pro fide etiam hereticos insequuntur, sed per arrogantiam eos qui intra Ecclesiam sunt contemnunt. Adversarios quidem fidei confutant pro infidelitate ; sed fideles premunt face superbiæ §." "We do not seek the conversion of infidels," says St. Bruno, "for our own exaltation, but for the greater glorification of the name of God ‖ ;" for, after all, as an illustrious ecclesiastic says, "Catholics have no need of you, but you have need of them. It is not they that will be worthy of compassion if you be not converted to truth. It is you who will lose all if you will not suffer yourself to be gained. Alas! they have sufficient labours, far less painful and less difficult than the taking care of your souls. There are millions of sinners to be reconciled, young persons to watch over, the faithful to console." Hurter, alluding to certain measures against heretics, says, "that his obligations towards men in good health appeared to Pope Innocent III. superior to those of treating the diseased ¶." The true discipline involves cautions in regard to men who come with offers from a hostile camp. The adage of the thirteenth century said, "Le loup alla à Rome, et y laissa de son poil et rien de ses coustumes." When the barbarians, passing into Gaul, applied to the bishops and requested the honour of baptism, they were re-

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* ix. 511.
† ix. 42.
‡ Lib. de Corpore et Sang. Dom.
§ De Sum. Bon. ii. 2.
‖ In Ps. cxiii.
¶ lib. xiv.

quired to fast for seven days, and not until the eighth day, after instruction, was their petition granted. Towards heretics the precautions were far greater. In spiritual as in bodily maladies, the state of convalescence requires care. By the constitutions of Pamiers, in the south of France, for restoring peace and suppressing error, in the time of Pope Innocent III., it was ordained that "a man who had been recently reconciled to the Church should not visit, without permission, the country which he had inhabited previously *." In fact, the phenomena presented by heresy, when men are entering from it on the state of convalescence, are often as significative as those supplied by the disease when its force is at the greatest. There are men returning towards truth from local systems, of whom an eulogium might be composed in words like those of Cicero, saying, "Critolaus imitari antiquos voluit et quidem est gravitate proximus et redundat oratio : attamen is quidem in patriis institutis manet †." Sometimes one might truly say of them,—

> "Pingue sed ingenium mansit, nocituraque, ut ante
> Rursus erant domino stolidæ præcordia mentis ‡."

It is not, perhaps, even all professed converts who could repeat, as from themselves, what Constantine said to the Pagans :— "Intra Palatium nostrum Ecclesiam Christo arripui construendam ut universitas hominum comprobet nullum dubietatis in corde nostro vel præteriti erroris remansisse vestigium." "All new conversion," says St. Isidore, "has yet a certain mixture of former life ; therefore that virtue ought never to proceed to the eyes of men until the old conversation is wholly extirpated from the mind—ante conversionem præcedit turba peccatorum, post conversionem sequitur turba tentationum. Men lately converted ought not to be engaged in external cares, for if they be implicated in them, like trees just planted, and not yet rooted in the ground, they will be shaken and they will dry up. Valet interdum conversis pro animæ salute mutatio loci. Plerunque enim dum mutatur locus, mutatur et mentis affectus ; for the place itself where any one lived ill will recall to his mind his former thoughts and actions §." There are besides men who have left error without having even formally embraced truth. St. Augustin for a while was in this state. His mother, he says, wept and lamented—"veritatem me nondum adeptum sed falsitati jam ereptum ;" but she felt confident, "quod priusquam de hac vita emigraret me visura esset fidelem Catholicum ||." Such

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* Hurter, Gesch. xvi. † De Fin. v. ‡ xi. 6.

§ De Summo Bono, lib. ii. c. 8, 9, 10. || Conf. vi. 1.

confidence can direct those who are objects of it to recognise the divine source from which it is supplied—

> " Sæpe cicatrices in vulnera prisca resurgunt,
> Ad mala facta sui gens malè sana redit."

The advantages of faith can often be discerned when we meet some men who, though ranged under its banner, nevertheless hold the language of the wanderer still, always provided with a "but," as with their most necessary armour, exclaiming, "We have given up all for Catholicism, but see what Catholics are accused of teaching. We live among Protestants; we feel shame and anguish when they remind us of what passes elsewhere; a blow has been struck at the progress of truth in our particular country; the well-disposed to the Church are staggered and alarmed. How bitter is it to our hearts that we cannot defend the Church in other lands in our intercourse with our friends, or against the attacks of violent opponents in the senate." To waverers of this timid class the voice of faith is heard repeating words like those of Dante:—

> " Thus am I come: I saved thee from the beast,
> Who thy near way across the goodly mount
> Prevented. What is this comes o'er thee then!
> Why dost thou hang back? Why in thy breast
> Harbour vile fear? Why hast not courage there
> And noble daring * ?"

Ulysses, rising from sleep in Ithaca, does not recognise his country,—

> ——'Ο δ' ἔγρετο δῖος 'Οδυσσεὺς,
> Εὕδων ἐν γαίῃ πατρῴῃ, οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω,
> Ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών.

So do some converts appear evidently to have still misgivings, such force has their old error. They seem to suspect that Catholics will deceive—will rob them perhaps. "Alas!" they cry at moments, "to what land have the Phæacians conducted me?"

> Ὢ πόποι, οὐκ ἄρα πάντα νοήμονες, οὐδὲ δίκαιοι
> Ἦσαν Φαιήκων ἡγήτορες, ἠδὲ μέδοντες,
> Οἵ μ' εἰς ἄλλην γαῖαν ἀπήγαγον· ἦτέ μ' ἔφαντο
> Ἄξειν εἰς 'Ιθάκην εὐδείελον· οὐδ' ἐτέλεσσαν.

"They have deceived me! They have led me to a den!"

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* Infer. 2.

'Αλλ' ἄγε δὴ τὰ χρήματ' ἀριθμήσω, καὶ ἴδωμαι,
Μή τι μοι οἴχωνται κοίλης ἐπὶ νηὸς ἄγοντες.

Thus saying, they return to pass their former riches in review, as Homer's hero proceeded then to count the beautiful tripods and vessels, and the gold, and the rich garments*. How much had they in the world, while wandering with others! What honours, distinctions, friends, comforts, edifications perhaps. Their regrets are significative, indicating the immensity of the danger with which they had been encompassed. The advantages of faith and of Catholic training of the mind, are perhaps never more strikingly displayed than when some new convertites are seen near.

"Strenuitas antiqua manet—
———— forma est diversa priori †."

What must the convert from certain proud walks have been, far off, when coming to the Catholic Church he has such a lofty notion of his own wisdom and importance? for each seems to think that she has gained a prize in him, which must prevent her from taking rest; he is persuaded that she is crying out every night, like Artaxerxes, "I have Themistocles the Athenian!" Some thus returning, hold language that might remind one of Rhesus, when he came boasting to the assistance of the Trojans, and said to Hector, "I arrive late, it is true, but it is yet time. These ten years you have been combating without any advance, but one day will suffice for me to destroy the intrenchments of the Greeks, and cut their army in pieces. Henceforth let none of you take a shield. I know how to repress the pride of these formidable Greeks, and destroy them, however late my arrival. Moreover, not alone will I deliver the city, but I will then conduct an army to ravage all Greece, and make its inhabitants pay dearly for all the evils they have caused you." Hector replies, "Believe me, it is not so easy as you suppose to do this." "Hector," he again cries, "I wish to fight alone; or at least, if you insist on accompanying me, place me in face of Achilles, and in the front of the army—

Μόνος μάχεσθαι πολεμίοις, Ἕκτορ, θέλω.

Then, when Rhesus has been slain, his charioteer accuses the Trojans of having murdered him. "No," says the former friend, "it is not the Greeks whom we accuse. What open enemy could have discovered him?" To whom Hector calmly answers, "We have long had allies, and never until this day have I in-

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* xiii. 209.

† Met. ix. 9.

curred reproaches from any of them. You are the first to accuse me. No. I envied not his horses; I slew him not*." If men recovering health act from headstrong passions, the physician is not responsible for the consequences. It is the original disorder that has caused their death. Such, then, are the last symptoms of the disease which Catholicism has the mission to extirpate. It only remains to observe, how the Church invites all who suffer from it at every stage to press forward without delay to the fountains where their minds may be wholly and permanently restored. There is a Dantæan voice, which says to all men,—

"Come after us, and thou shalt find the cleft;
We may not linger: such resistless will
Speeds our unwearied course. Vouchsafe us then
Thy pardon, if our duty seem to thee
Discourteous rudeness †."

The blind world hears an admonition in every bell that tolls from consecrated tower, which seems to repeat what the children of Israel heard from Josué, saying to them, "How long are you indolent and slack, and unwilling to go in to possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you ‡?" Such too are the words that echo under these dark passes of the forest of life. "By the street of By-and-by," say the Spaniards, "you go to the house of Never." The Catholic Church can wait, but can you frail mortals wait? She says, in words perhaps like those of Dante,—

"Ofttimes my voice hath call'd thee. Rise, begone,
Let us the opening find where thou mayst pass §."

"Tolle moras: semper nocuit differre paratis ||."

Stand not politizing, when God with spread hands testifies to us and points us out the way to our peace. Let the will kneel within thy haughty heart.

"Let's take the instant by the forward top,
For we are old, and on our quick'st decrees
The inaudible and noiseless foot of time
Steals, ere we can effect them.
Recede not! Pause not now! Thou art grown old,
But hope will make thee young, for hope and youth
Are children of one mother."

But you reply, the moment is not propitious; you say, like one in the Greek tragedy, "We must wait for a favourable wind.

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* Rhesus, 488.
† Purg. 18.
‡ Josué xviii.
§ Purg. 19.
|| Lucan, i.

When the breeze which now blows from the prow has fallen, we can hoist sails. Now it is contrary." The reply of Philoctetes seems intended for you alone :—

Ἀεὶ καλὸς πλοῦς ἔσθ' ὅταν φεύγῃς κακά *.

Or is it for your country that you wait? Hear the wise poet, who whispers to your ear,

> "The public body doth seldom play the recantor,
> Feeling in itself a lack of aid †."

Take the advice of Cicero to Plancus—"Delay not in hopes of succour from the senate. Ipse tibi sis senatus ‡." Does not even the Pagan awaken you, when he asks indignantly,—

"Quisquam, vivere cum sciat, moratur?"

It is, however, a very common evil that detains you; it is in the air over this whole region of the forest. St. Augustin himself was for delay. All he had to urge was—"Ecce modo, sine modo, sine paululum—sed modo et modo non habebat modum, et sine paululum in longum ibat §." Then custom is invoked—

> ——— "Custom calls you to't!
> What custom wills, in all things should we do't.
> The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
> And mountainous error be too highly heap'd
> For truth to overpeer."

"Am I mad," asks the wanderer, at length submissive to truth's guidance, "for changing these customs?"

Εἰ δ' ἐγὼ γνοὺς πρόσθεν οὐκ εὖ μετετέθην εὐβουλίᾳ
μαίνομαι ‖;

"Change the money," said the oracle to Diogenes, meaning, do not follow custom; which counsel being taken in the literal sense, he altered the money in the public bank, and had to fly in consequence. Alas! what are not men ready to change rather than the custom which associates them with error and the evil choice of their rash ancestors?

"Consuetudo," says St. Cyprian, "quæ apud quosdam irrepsit, impedire non debet quominus veritas prævaleat et vincat; nam consuetudo sine veritate, vetustas erroris est: propter quod relicto errore sequamur veritatem, scientes quod veritas vincit,

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[*] Phil. 64. [†] Timon of Athens. [‡] Ep. x. 16.
[§] De Verb. Dom. serm. xvi. [‖] Iph. in Aul. 385.

veritas manet et invalescit in æternum *." Catholicism requires something that your custom has not sanctioned? "But," replies St. Augustin, "cum Deus aliquid contra morem aut pactum quorumlibet jubet, et si nunquam ibi factum est, faciendum est; et si omissum instaurandum; et, si institutum non erat, instituendum est †." You have tried already, and miserably felt what ambition, worldly glory, and immoderate wealth can do; what the boisterous and contradictional hand of a temporal, earthly, and corporeal spirituality can avail to the edifying of Christ's holy Church. Were it such a desperate hazard to put to the venture the accomplishment of God's word, and to take your part with the universal congregation of the faithful? Were it such an incurable mischief to make a little trial what Catholicism would do to meet the difficulties that now beset you on all sides, as rather to use every poor shift, and, if that serve not, to threaten uproar and combustion, and shake the brand of civil discord?

"Away then, friends! Take the new flight
And happy newness that intends old right."

Others, as intelligent as yourself, were persuaded to maintain that right. The Catholic Nestor may conclude therefore, saying in Homeric words,—

Ἀλλὰ πίθεσθε καὶ ὔμμες· ἐπεὶ πείθεσθαι ἄμεινον ‡.

Hear the loving and sublime words of the Roman Pontifical, in the order for receiving back apostates:—"Enter the Church of God from which you incautiously have wandered, and recognise that you have escaped the snares of death—horresce idola; respue omnem pravitatem, sive superstitionem hereticam. Cole Deum Patrem omnipotentem et Jesum Christum filium ejus, et Spiritum Sanctum, unum, verum, et verum Deum, sanctam et individuam Trinitatem §." There will be some, once perhaps thought invincibly ignorant, who will profit by the signal. "Time conquers all things," says the chorus in Sophocles, "and nothing henceforth will seem incredible to me, since Ajax is reconciled to the Atreidæ."

Κοὐδὲν ἀναύδατον φατίσαιμ' ἄν, εὖ-
τέ γ' ἐξ ἀέλπτων
Αἴας μετανεγνώσθη
Θυμοῦ τ' Ἀτρείδαις μεγάλων τε νεικέων ||.

That I neither feel how the Catholic Church should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion, will many of

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[*] St. Cyprian, epist. lxxiv.
[†] Confess. iii. 8.
[‡] Il. i.
[§] Ordo ad Reconciliandum Apostatam.
[||] Ajax, 715.

the "well-named" say, "that fire cannot melt out of me; I will die in it at the stake." Yet a day comes when some one of these very men is heard to exclaim,—

> "My only love sprung from my only hate!
> Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
> That I must love a loathed enemy."

Even so: all is possible when God works,—

> *Γένοιτο μέντ' ἂν πᾶν, θεοῦ τεχνωμένου* [*].

He who "as clear as earthly thought determines two obtuse in one triangle not to be contained, so clear dost see contingencies ere in themselves [†]," can accomplish what he has promised by the prophet, saying, "Et requiescere faciam superbiam infidelium, et arrogantiam fortium humiliabo [‡]."

> "So with the word the time will bring on summer,
> When briars shall have leaves as well as thorns,
> And be as sweet as sharp."

Tertullian says to the Pagans, that he too once used to laugh at the Christian doctrine. "Hance et nos risimus aliquando; de vestris, fuimus; fiunt non nascuntur Christiani." How many join as boys in the sacrilegious buffoonery of the "well-named," on their religious anniversaries, who afterwards, as men, learn to compassionate such sport; some spirit had touched their eyes, saying the while, like Oberon,—

> "When they next wake, all this derision
> Shall seem a dream, and fruitless vision;
> And then I will their charmed eye release
> From monster's view, and all things shall be peace."

In fact, it is often suddenly, as if waking with a start, that the resolution is formed to make for the centre, and forsake the crooked ways and the wind-blown road of error. It is not madness, folly, passion, which inclines their will, 'tis the choicest gift of heaven—decision, sent to their aid at that critical moment on which depends their condition for eternity. The words which poets furnish are then used with truth:

> ——————— "And beshrew my soul
> But I do love the favour and the form
> Of this most fair occasion, by the which
> We will untread the steps of damned flight,
> And, like a bated and retired flood,
> Leaving our rankness and irregular course,
> Stoop low within those bounds we have o'erlook'd
> And calmly run on in obedience,
> Even to our ocean."

[*] Soph. Ajax, 86. [†] Par. 16. [‡] Esai. xiii.

"O tortuosas vias!" exclaims one who had long trod them, and had now found rest, "væ animæ audaci quæ speravit, si a te recessisset, se aliquid melius habituram!" You turn to this side and to that, and all things are hard, when lo, thou, O God, dost guide us back to the way of peace. "Et ecce ades; et liberas a miserabilibus erroribus, et constituis nos in via tua, et consolaris *." But not so do all men return and escape. Lost on many are even the examples of those who pass to truth. "It was thought that the path was opened, forgetting," to use the words of a great author, "that in earthly things a path can very rarely be spoken of; for, as the water that is dislodged by a ship instantly flows in again behind it, so by the law of its nature, when eminent spirits have once driven error aside, and made a place for themselves, it very quickly closes upon them again." Behind how many great men has the path that they violently forced for themselves to the Catholic Church already closed, leaving others to grope through tangled thorns as bewildered and as dark as ever! There are counter voices on this road, referring all such escapes to the eccentricity of genius, or to the delusions of weakness, or to the pride of mediocrity. There are angry voices which cry, like Satan to his peers,—

> "Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
> The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
> To know ye right †."

To this dreadful voice, suggested by the fiend, they listen, and resolve henceforth to yield no more. "Enough," they reply; "we brave the future; we are content to hear the rest after death, in accordance with our choice"—

> Τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἐν Ἅιδου τοῖς κάτω μυθήσομαι ‡.

"It is too late," replied a French rebel to the representative of peace on earth, and glory yielded to God on high, whom he had dethroned. "It is too late," is the consecrated phrase with all who choose revolt and disobedience. Luther also uttered his "too late" when his wife Catherine de Bora proposed that they should measure back their steps to Rome. "Too late!" It is the poet of the world who says, "The damned use that word in hell; howlings attend it." But not even this thought can stay unholy arrogance on earth: the man is so proud that the death tokens of it cry—no recovery.

We must then still follow pride's erring children through gloomy tracts, where those whom heresy has blown unto the worst assume a new name.

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[*] S. Aug. Confess. vi. 16.

[†] v.

[‡] Soph. Ajax, 865.

> "Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
> The seat of desolation, void of light
> Save what the glimmering of livid flames
> Casts pale and dreadful ?"

Thither must we bend our steps.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ROAD OF THE DRY TREE.

HOLLOW trees are not the only symbols of decay presented in this mournful region on which we are now entering. The ground itself, at places, is hollow and treacherous, and Cato said of old, "Terram cariosam cave neve plaustro, neve pecore impellas;" which caution suggests to Pliny the remark, "Quid putamus hac appellatione ab eo tantopere reformidari, ut pæne vestigiis quoque interdicat [*]?"

There are tracts fatal to all who tread them. Nature herself seems from the beginning to have interposed barriers to deter wanderers from proceeding in this direction; for in the moral world we find almost universally certain limits which awe the human mind by their mysterious horror, as when rose before the eyes of the poet—

> "Rocks, which, in unimaginable forms,
> Lifted their black and barren pinnacles
> In the light of evening, and some precipice,
> Obscuring the ravine, disclosed above,
> 'Mid toppling stones, black gulphs and yawning caves,
> Whose windings gave ten thousand various tongues
> To the loud stream."

It is the symbol of moral death, multiplied in every form, that scares one when first entered upon this path. Here is found that weed which will never grow near the innocent rue that is an enemy to poison,—weed, so potent in its direful qualities, that some old herbalists, who have not the clue of divine faith to direct them, say, by merely smelling it, a scorpion may be bred in the brain. The ground between the leafless trees, as if the decaying dead were animated with a spirit of growth, is co-

[*] N. H. xvii. 3.

vered thick with hideous speckled fungi, which, too, have found their admirers, who have passed their lives classifying them, like those who dwell with rapture on the life of all loathliest moral weeds. Here hemlock stretches out its long and hollow shank,—

"And plants, at whose names the verse feels loath,
Fills the place with a monstrous undergrowth,
Prickly, and pulpous, and blistering, and blue,
Livid, and starred with a lurid dew."

"Ivy," as Pliny says, "inimical to the tree, and sufficiently hurtful to all things, fracturing walls and sepulchres, most grateful to the cold of serpents, so that it is strange it should have any honour, as in the solemn rites of the Thracian people *," has covered to the highest branches the trees that lean mournfully, as if ready to fall, across the path, their roots wasted and hollowed under by a black stream which eats away the earth around them. Here grow yews, dismal and dire, with no sap, and bearing deadly berries—in Spain so poisonous, that vessels made from the wood cause death; in Arcadia, so fatal, that they who sleep under their shade die; which the ancients, ever prone to seek vain remedies, thought could be made harmless, if a brass nail were driven into the tree †. Vast trunks present upon their branches the misletoe, which grows where no leaves grow, and adheres to them with a perennial leaf when they are stript and naked ‡. Foresters tell us that noble trees are chosen by certain insects for depositing their eggs in their substance, producing larvæ which become more or less fatal, and that the same oak sometimes receives the nests of twenty different species of insects, some of which produce the excrescence called the oak-apple. Here are vast withered trees, some in the sweet summer stript of every leaf by caterpillars, others by lightning blasted, and become a naked ruin,—

"The sap shrank to the root, through every pore,
As the blood to a heart that will beat no more."

"O how much our Lord is to be thanked," exclaims Antonio de Guevara, contemplating a wilderness like this, "for saying not that He will cut the tree when it is somewhat dry, but when it shall be wholly dry, to show that our Lord waiteth a long time with his mercy §!"

On proceeding, we find trees diminished in size, as if their growth had been affected by certain black fetid pools and foul water-courses which occur here and there, the dwarf oak, and

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* xvi. 62.
† xvi. 20.
‡ xvi. 93.
§ The Myst. of Mt. Calv.

a certain plant resembling the Spanish palmetto, covering the whole tract, which latter shrub has been described as a dwarf aping a giant, being a caricature of the great Eastern palm. Earth, air and water seem here alike infected. Pliny speaks of a mountain on which are three fountains, "sine remedio, sine dolore mortiferi." The atmosphere over these infectious drains is a sufficient warning to fly from the place, and to return to some high main way, where they are arched over by charitable hands. There can be no use in following their banks, or marking in what direction they disgorge themselves, when the rains of autumn impart some motion to their vile contents. This noxious tract farther on will become wholly desolate with deep sand, over which will appear the phenomenon of waves, produced by the wild toying of the hot wind with the faithless dust, which always falls back again upon the joyless plain, and never reaches the solid land where any thing can flourish—it is the suffocating vapour rebelliously given back to the glowing sun by the unfruitful sands. These mysterious journeys of life involve thus for many men much that is fearful and horrible, so that the first signal to Catholicism, on the way we have now to follow, seems to be supplied by the calm courage of those who proceed undismayed through the worst regions, repeating words of confidence, like those of Dante, where he says,—

——"With such desire
Thou hast disposed me to renew my voyage,
That my first purpose fully is resumed.
Lead on; one only will is in us both.
Thou art my guide, my master thou, and Lord.
So spake I; and, when he had onward moved,
I enter'd on the wild and dreadful way."

We have proceeded but a short distance, and now the night seems to have come on unexpectedly, sinistrous with palpable darkness. The lightning flashes through the trees, and, when we come to any open space, casts a broad lurid gleam over the forest domes. Storms hatch insects and bring them forth. It is in thundering weather that snakes most crawl abroad. We shall have to walk with caution. This is an ancient track, more or less trodden, in all ages of the world. The serpent wore it at the commencement; and, among men, those of later ages are not the first to pass along it, though like all their predecessors they may claim the merit of novel invention, and proclaim the wonders of their own progress. "Nabuchodonosor, a vain-glorious man," says Rupertus, "because he had increased Babylon, with a loud voice exclaimed, 'Nonne hæc est Babylon magna quam ego ædificavi?' he does not say which I have amplified, but which I have built; whereas, he built it not. In

like manner, men imagine that they are the first to publish their blasphemies, whereas others long before have done so *." That infidelity (for this is what the road implies) existed in the Merovingian days can be inferred from the complaints of St. Gregory of Tours, where he says, "If we are amazed at the scourges laid upon them, let us recur to what their parents did, and to what they perpetrate; for they, after the preaching of priests, were turned from temples to churches, and these, on the contrary, daily make the churches their prey. They venerated the priests of the Lord with all their hearts, and heard them; and these not only do not hear, but persecute them, laying waste the monasteries and the churches of God †." "Chilperic," he says, "the Nero of our times, hated the causes of the poor; he assiduously blasphemed the priests of the Lord, and he made a jest of the bishops of the church, calling one of them a light man, another proud, another rich, another luxurious. This one, he said, was vain, that one haughty, nullam rem plus odio habens quam ecclesias ‡." Libertines and sensuals, who all the headed evils that they with licence of a brutish mind have caught would disgorge into the general world, could be found thus in the middle ages combined with infidels, who, as our old manuals attest, used to laugh at confession, and say that there was no such thing as hell, or devil, or a future life, and that priests had invented them in order that men might fear themselves §. The Hungarian bishop, whose letter to the bishop of Paris, describing the Tartars, is given by Mathieu Paris, says, "I interrogated them respecting what they believed; and, to say all in one word, they believe in nothing." Our missioners in China have remarked that the very spirit of Voltaire reigns among the chiefs of that population, as it has probably prevailed amongst them for thousands of years. European infidels have therefore nothing to boast of on the score of their being the first to mark out this disdainful track. They have barbarian kings of the first race in France, and mandarins in China for their intellectual associates. However, the finding themselves here, after following the two last roads, seems to be for many men but the necessary consequence of an original mistake, already on those roads observed. From the first there was little sign that the treacherous path would to the right line return. Results more fatal could not occur than presented themselves at the first step, though later they might assume a more grim and terrible aspect.

"Farthest from heaven's all-circling orb, the road
Full well I know ‖."

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* De Vict. Verbi Dei, lib. vi. 28.

† Hist. lib. iv. 48.

‡ Id. lib. vii. 6.

§ Mag. Spec. 132.

‖ Inf. 4.

The ancient forester, describing one sinistrous region, adds, "Præterea serpentium multitudo, nisi hieme, transitum non sinit*." Here the danger is the same in all seasons; and, if the serpent's path be chosen for itself, men have to thank themselves for the consequence. Heresy, whose tongue outvenoms all the worms of Nile, was pointed out indeed at the beginning in language as strong as when the asp was brought to Cleopatra with the quaint words,—

> "This is certain, the worm's an odd worm.
> I wish you all joy of the worm;
> You must think this, look you, that the
> Worm will do his kind.
> Look you, the worm is not to be trusted,
> But in the keeping of wise people; for,
> Indeed, there is no goodness in the worm."

Protestantism, by rejecting the authority of the Church, opens the gate, as Balmes observes, to the two opposite extremes of fanaticism and indifference†; which last cannot conceal its genealogical descent from the "well-named," though, as in France under the regent and Louis XV., and as in Switzerland at present, it may render their condition far worse than ever it was known to be in any country under the Catholic domination‡. The thoughts of Protestantism are often like unbridled children, grown too headstrong for their mother;—

> "She, that herself will sliver and disbranch
> From her material sap, perforce must wither
> And come to deadly use."

Protestantism, by abolishing the eucharistic sacrifice, opens the way to all spiritual degradation. "Tolle hoc sacramentum de ecclesia," said St. Bonaventura, with prophetic wisdom, "et quid erit in mundo, nisi error et infidelitas? et populus Christianus erit quasi grex porcorum dispersus et idolatriæ deditus, sicut expresse patet in cæteris infidelibus§." The apostolic extension given to the word idolatry with the evidence of modern times leaves no part of the prediction unverified. Protestantism, by placing men in an untenable position, leads to this result, that its adepts, who, rather than mount upwards to Catholicity, would always choose to take any downward course, when they find it impossible to remain half way suspended on the declivity, make their choice in an instant, and, without ceremony or apology to those whom they are leaving, slide quietly to the depths below,

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* N. H. vi. 17. † Chap. vii.
‡ Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Mme. de Maintenon, iv. 4.
§ De Præpar. ad Missam, c. 2.

where generally one hears no more of them. The father of Montaigne said of Protestantism, "Que ce commencement de maladie déclineroit ayseement en un exsécrable athéisme;" and assuredly it was not long before his prophecy was fulfilled. Almost immediately appeared steering between the Catholic faith of Spain, and the Calvinism of the north, the race of libertine sceptics, whose theory of indifference, ending in a convenient Deism, was held in such just horror, as a French writer says, by the bourgeois, the merchant, the magistrate, the provost, and the physician as well as the priest*. Between the Calvinistic systems of the Hague and Geneva appeared in time the sceptical school of Bayle, which drew from the principle of private judgment the triumph of pure incredulity†. Anglicanism sent forth a Herbert of Cherbury, a Hobbes, a Blount, a Collins, a Woolston, a Hume, a Tindal, a Morgan, a Chubbs, a Toland, a Bolingbroke—names sufficient, one might have thought, to startle its admirers, and direct them to a safer road. Then it was said,—

——— "The seeded pride,
That hath to this maturity blown up
In Protestantism, must or now be cropp'd,
Or, shedding, breed a nursery of like evil
To overbulk us all."

Anglicanism continues to send forth men who range themselves on the side of all the avowed enemies of Christianity—men who so readily, not to say invariably, fall into the snares laid by infidelity, when misrepresenting contemporary events, as in the instance of its calumnies against Franzoni, the illustrious confessor archbishop of Turin, that it is clear their will enters largely into the grounds of their mistake—men who repeat with a complacency, which nothing but an identity of origin can explain, whatever the Voltairean crew agrees to shout forth at particular moments, when attacking all that is holy and venerable, heroic, just, and magnanimous upon earth; it continues to send forth men who find that each successive stage of doubt finds a natural resting-place within the ample limits of the Socinian school. Lulled by the philosophic sounds of peace and charity, they glide gently downwards, till they find themselves lodged at the base of that precipice, from whose brink they would never have dared to spring. Descents of this kind are not indeed chronicled in the newspapers; but few, we are told, can form an adequate idea of the extent to which this approximation to unbelief is ever going on within the reformed domains, which abound with men under every garb, as bishops, as prime minis-

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* Philarète Chasles, Études sur l'Espagne.

† Le Duc de Noailles Hist. de Mme. de Maint. iv.

ters, as fine writers, grave lecturers, and philosophic travellers, who have all one doctrine, that is, to have no doctrine, to hold the very word "dogma" in horror, to boast of having substituted opinions for the infallible rule of faith, to boast in consequence of their strength.

> "Alas, what strength? Opinion is more frail
> Than yon dim cloud now fading on the moon
> Even while we gaze, though it awhile avail
> To hide the orb of truth."

What would not opinion hide—what would it not gild with a false lustre? It would make day night, and recall night as morn. Some, in consequence, we find prepared, like a recent traveller, to say of Spain, on describing the Puerto de los Perros, through which the conquered Moors passed out of Andalousia, "il est fâcheux peut-etre qu'elle ne soit pas restée Moresque et Mahométane;" or, with Goethe, that they "have never been able to think Mahomet an impostor." Others ready, like that German philosopher, "whenever they read missionary intelligence, to take the part of the Pagans against the missionaries, and to praise their old condition as preferable to their new one;" others again, like the illustrious Humboldt, who are content with cautiously contriving to enlist, on the side of noble enthusiasm for scientific discoveries, the prejudices of a system in which they may feel personally but a very moderate degree of interest, by carefully pointing out the coincidence between great events favourable, as they assume, to both: as where the author of Cosmos alludes to the "Reformation, which promised to the mind of man freedom and progress in almost untried paths;" and concludes his allusion to it by remarking how it "passed through the different phases of its development in a region which became the refuge of all religious opinions, and of the most different views in divine things." It is around such men of various capacity that now gathers the universal sect, whose wanderings we are about briefly to observe, casting a hasty glance at each side to mark the signals provided for it, passing through the forest thus with fear, since here it is certain that we shall meet with

> —— "Ills of every form,
> Where passions rage and hurricanes descend;
> Where every one should seek to fly the storm,
> And guide from it both enemy and friend."

"It is a piteous spectacle," the abbé Fayette used to say, in his keen and profound style, from the pulpit of St. Roch,—"it is really a sorry sight, reserved for our days, to behold the whole of society at school. Formerly every one, it is true, went to

school, leaving it, however, when he was grown up and his education finished; but now, from seven to ninety years of age, every one is a schoolboy, endeavouring to make out, and from contradictory masters too, what is right and what is wrong, the a, b, c of religion and morals and philosophy." "A man indeed without faith must," as another keen observer says, "have masters, systems, opinions, prejudices, and slavery; whereas, already a signal to the centre is constituted by the fact, that to Catholics possessing faith men appear what they really are; that is, in regard to the sources of the human dignity, only their equals*," possessing no right to impose their views or formulas, like a Procrustean bed, upon others. The poet of this society, thus bewildered, in his songs of twilight, acknowledges the justice of such statements; for he exclaims,—

"Hélas! l'humanité va peut-être trop vite!
Où tend ce siecle? Où court le troupeau des esprits?
Rien n'est encor trouvé, rien n'est encor compris;
Vous n'avez pas de foi, vous n'avez pas d'amour,
Rien chez vous n'est encore éclairé du vrai jour!
Crépuscule et brouillard, que vos plus clairs systêmes,
Dans vos lois, dans vos mœurs, et dans vos esprits mêmes,
Partout l'aube blanchâtre ou le couchant vermeil,
Nulle part le midi! nulle part le soleil!"

"He who has to ford across a deep river or torrent," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "must take heed of many things. First, not to enter the water rashly, but step by step; secondly, not to trust to his eyes alone, but to use a staff to measure the depth as he walks; thirdly, if it be in the night-time, that from the banks some one may hold out a light to him. Oh, what a deep river we have now to traverse! In this many have perished! In this perished Arius—in this Sabellius, Photinus, and innumerable others. Let us enter it then gently, gradually; let us feel our way with the staff of faith, and not trust our own vision; for faith should precede and reason follow; and, since we walk in the depths of an obscure night, ever since we lost the light of spiritual intelligence by the fall, let us entreat some one from the bank of security and glory, who has already passed the ford, and escaped the danger, to stretch out to us a light to enlighten our intelligence†." The whole region then is only symbolical of the moral waste before us, menacing, and sinister, and dangerous. What roaring of wild animals beneath the dreadful gloom!

——"Juga cœpta moveri
Silvarum, visæque canes ululare per umbram."

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[*] S. Foi.

[†] In Fest. S. Trin. c. i.

Amidst the desert of doubt and infidelity there are not however wanting signals pointing to Catholicism, as to the central truth, and expressly supplied by the objects seen upon this particular track, which the unblessed steps of multitudes have worn. Of these, two may be said to be eminently conspicuous, consisting in a consideration of the seed and fruit, or the original cause and the natural consequences of infidelity. Let us then mark these in order as we pass. We are not about to invoke for protection and guidance Christian writers, who treat of the scientific objections that have been advanced against the Catholic religion. They render service, no doubt; but it may be a great mistake to make science the foundation of faith, like men who are ever searching for reasons drawn from geology and chemistry, from astronomy and political economy, to defend religious truth. It is not indeed truth of any kind, or its investigation, which can ever lead men from it; but neither is it scientific truth which can confer faith. Savonarola, after stating all the temptations to incredulity which the most ingenious of the modern sophists have subsequently advanced against faith, adds that "sadness overpowered him, but so as to draw him rather to despair than to infidelity, which," says he, "was a gift of God to me for faith in his gift *."

Pride and transgression of the moral law, which is confirmed or promulgated by the Catholic religion, constitute clearly the primal cause of all apostasy. The world at large, and the little world of each man's mind, will sometimes present the same phenomenon as occurs in rocky forests, where subterraneous conflagrations have been smouldering for years together, through old broken-up coal-pits and horizontal shafts with which the mountain is undermined. No one passing has any suspicion of the danger, till at length the flames burst out and disperse the labourers. Let us first examine the evil in its more incipient form, as only prompting men, to whom pity seems, at first sight, most due, to say sorrowfully,—

> "I am amazed, methinks; and lose my way
> Among the thorns and dangers of this world.
> I am as one lost in a midnight wood,
> Who dares not ask some harmless passenger
> The path across the wilderness, lest he,
> As my thoughts are, should be a murderer."

For him you crave compassion. But what has led him to this state? If once Christian, a proud rejection of the Catechism; an arrogant reliance on his own judgment, preferring some infidel leader to the guide of his youth; a wilful turning aside

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* Med. in Ps. In te, Dom., speravi.

from the straight path which the Catholic religion had marked out for the children of men. Now he finds it impossible to escape from the magic circle of Voltaire.

> "But the dark fiend who, with his iron pen
> Dipp'd in scorn's fiery poison, makes his fame
> Enduring there, would o'er the heads of men
> Pass harmless, if they scorn'd to make their hearts his den."

Noble qualities he still may have retained: Catholicism denies them not; it claims them as its own; for the Church is a mother, who can truly say, with Volumnia, to such a son,—

> "Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me:
> But owe thy pride thyself."

Schiller describes the miserable descent we speak of: "The heightened opinion which a man acquires of his own worth makes him," says this observer, "credit the excessive, and almost idolatrous, adoration that is paid to his understanding. It is a tribute which he feels entitled to by right. He is not allowed time for reflection; his existence is a continued state of intoxication, a whirl of excitement. That anxious sensibility, those glorious truths which his heart once embraced, now begin to be the objects of his ridicule. His disposition begins to alter, and caprice to exhibit itself. The most beautiful ornament of his character, his modesty, vanishes—his heart is poisoned. His tone becomes decisive and despotic, and, when at home, he is scarcely ever seen otherwise than gloomy, peevish, and unhappy." For what is he not then prepared? and who, without a great effort, and employing all the considerations which he rejects with scorn, can feel compassion for him? St. Augustin says of Alipius, that at one time he was unwilling the name of Christ should appear in his letters. "Magis enim eas volebat redolere gymnasiorum cedros quas jam contrivit Dominus, quam salubres herbas ecclesiasticas adversas serpentibus*." In many, the pride which causes infidelity assumes thus the form of a classic taste. But it rarely stops here. It proceeds to discard the Bible as an old monkish book, and provide on every shelf the writings that contradict it. It studies them day and night, like the young liberal alcalde of Corcuvion, lately arrived from Madrid, who congratulated an English traveller on his being a countryman of Jeremy Benthem—the "grand Baintham," as he styled him, "the most universal genius which the world ever produced, a man who has invented laws for all the world, which it

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* Confess. ix. 4.

is hoped will shortly be adopted in unhappy Spain." Let such a philosopher have power, and pride will confound all things.

> "Audax omnia perpeti
> Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas[*]."

Bion called impiety "a bad companion of security, which deceives the boldest man." We make trifles of terrors, ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear. Here is that Charybdis, here are the horrid rocks from which we were to fly; but men hear false echoes, that call on them to launch towards them,—

> ——— "Fugite, O miseri, fugite, atque ab littore funem
> Rumpite" ———

They proceed,—

> ——— "Ne quid inausum
> Aut intentatum scelerisve dolive fuisset[†]."

Alas! here it is not a just inference, that men are of a godlike race because they appear bold and full of themselves, as when the poet said,—

> "Quem sese ore ferens! quam forti pectore et armis!
> Credo equidem (nec vana fides) genus esse Deorum[‡]."

Each man, in evincing affinity with the race opposed to Heaven, is here his own counsellor, and wishes to give law to all others: each, like the false Homeric heroes, crying,—

> Κέκλυτέ μευ,
> Ὄφρ' εἴπω τά με θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι κελεύει[§];

while the fearful spectacle of mental aberration points to the perilous consequences of sacrificing faith at the shrine of pride. Then it is the physician, rather than the philosopher, who can understand the lecturer and the lecture. It is he who, from his experience of all diseases, can detect in an instant the spot where lies the cause of the whole prodigious evil. In the middle ages occurred a memorable example of the consequences of the intellectual superiority which is combined with inordinate pride and an unbounded egotism. This event is related with simplicity, and occurs, with slight variations, in many of those old books which unlock the secrets of the human heart[||]. An historian of the thirteenth century inserts it in his annals. Baron says that

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[*] Hor. Car. i. 3.

[†] Æn. viii. 205.

[‡] Id. iv. 11.

[§] viii. 351.

[||] Baron. Annales SS. Ord. Trin. ad ann. 1201.

it was an English theologian. Mathieu Paris only names him as Simon of Tournay, who furnished the lesson which all succeeding ages should remember. He had been thirty years a Master of Arts, teaching in the schools of Paris, and some more years lecturing on the most subtle points of theology. "He was a man," says the monk of St. Alban's, "of great capacity, and prodigious memory; profound in the Trivium and Quadrivium. After studying theology, he explained with such subtlety all questions, that multitudes flocked to his lectures. His auditors used to return stupified with admiration. One day, being requested to commit his lecture to writing, Simon, exalted by praise and drunk with success, raised his eyes to heaven, and, with audacious pleasantry, said, 'O, Jesule! Jesule! my little Jesus! this day I have rendered thee service; but, if I wished to make war with thee, I could still more easily attack thy religion and overthrow it.' The words were no sooner uttered than he was struck dumb, and reduced to the state of a moping idiot. After remaining two years in this piteous condition, he began to learn to read, but could hardly stammer out a Pater and the Credo. This prodigy put an end to the pride of the scholastics. Master Nicholas, of Feversham, afterwards bishop of Durham, was witness of the fact; and it is on his report, from his lips, and yielding to his persuasion, that I insert it in this history, that such a miracle may never be forgotten. His testimony is worthy of all credit*."

What a field for reflection is here opened! How truthful seems the record! How every deep heart must be prepared for admitting the possibility and probability of the fact attested! for experience proves, that it is a perilous task when one assumes the office of proving faith by science, and even of defending truth with any personal zeal, without trembling. A secret reaction may take place in the mind, which, at moments, will feel as if it were sufficient to attack its own works; and then the spectacle of intellectual ruin, in the form of infidelity, is often seen to follow. Heaven preserve the wisest and greatest from supposing that the Almighty needs the assistance of their genius, or "that the omniscient God, whom fools and miscreants are denying in the midst of his creation, needeth to justify himself by the mouth of dust." All who are so unfortunate as to entertain such thoughts are removed but one step from a fatal precipice, into which they may feel an impulse to cast themselves headlong. To raise itself above all that is called God is the sign of Antichrist. Such the blazon on the standard that precedes the legion we are about to view. "Logically," as a French author observes, "the deification of reason is the last of

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* Ad ann. 1201.

all heresies ; so we shall soon meet those who raise themselves in religion, in politics, philosophy, and morals, above all divine authority*;" drawing innumerable men, of still more limited understandings, after them in their fall ; for, as Chateaubriand says of Voltaire, "the arch infidel resembles the ancient oriental despot, on whose tomb are immolated slaves." The precipice down which these intrepid adventurers precipitate themselves is constituted by the very nature of divine truth, which, by presenting difficulties to their reason, irritates their presumption, and causes them to renounce the ways which lead to it. In old books, the enemy of man is represented taking advantage of this impulse in the human heart to propel them from the brink. So, in one of them, when Moses has unfolded the doctrine of our Saviour's incarnation, we read, "Respond, Belial, Cecy ne peut entrer en mon cueur que Dieu aie baille son fils a mourir pour lomme villain et serf ; cecy abhorrissent les loys et nature que le seigneur meure pour son serviteur, et est cecy chose incredule a tous les auditeurs†." So, too, the arch sophist is represented by the poet, saying,—

"Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Consider'd all things visible in heaven,
Or earth, or middle ; all things fair and good."

For nature is praised while denying its Author, and all is pretended to be done for the greater good of humanity.

"The tempter—but with show of zeal and love
To man, and indignation at his wrong—
New part puts on."

Each of his disciples represents himself

——— "as author unsuspect,
Friendly to man ; far from deceit or guile
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings
Wherewith to scorn the earth."

In all distinguishable good each may be poor and naked,—

—— *ἀλλὰ θεομαχεῖν μόνον*
οἷος τ' ἐκεῖνος‡.

"A God who governs," exclaims now the chief of the sad college, "and who does not explain himself, is a God that I deny,

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* Gaume, Hist. de la Société Domest.

† Procès entre Bélial, &c. 80.

‡ Bacch. 1255.

and that I hate above all things. As for me, I challenge investigation; and, if the Supreme Revealer refuse to instruct me, I will instruct myself; I will descend into the depths of my soul; I will eat, like my father, the sacred fruit of knowledge. Heaven, hast thou secrets? Man unveils them. I have none." Thus does the revolutionist in 1849 pursue the teaching which a poet traces from beneath, where vain wisdom, and a false philosophy,

> ——— "with a pleasing sorcery could charm
> Pain for a while, or anguish, and excite
> Fallacious hope, or arm the obdurate breast
> With stubborn patience as with triple steel."

Σκαιὸς πέφυκας, τοῦ θεοῦ πλείω φρονῶν,

says Demophon to Copreus, in the Heracleidæ*. But such horrible confessions explain the sublime words of Dante, that it was infinite love which prepared for some of human kind, who would build a heaven where yet heaven could never be, a place of final separation; for how could there be a calm empire of divine harmonies, if spirits, like an inextinguishable fire, burning towards it with fierce reproach and doubt, and hurling up insurrection with immortal hate, were to enter it with their pride, resolved, as they declare themselves, neither to change nor to repent, and crying, "The darkness which ascends with me

> "'Shall wrap in lasting night heaven's kingless throne!'"

How great is the change, even on this earth, when voices of this kind are heard. "Oh! fool that I was!" cries Schiller's representative of late repentance. "Oh! vain trifling! Here I stand on the brink of a fearful life, and learn, with wailing and gnashing of teeth, that two men like myself could ruin the whole edifice of the moral world." Traverse the ocean; visit the forests of the Orinoco, the steppes of Venezuela, the wildernesses of Peru and Mexico; how would such company disturb the harmonious enjoyment which the view of nature, on this enlarged scale, supplies. If, when confronted with such spirits, you demand where can be found place for others on an earth expanded by the power of ubiquity, and narrowed by the scanty proportions of a globe polluted in every spot, and if then you accept as a last refuge the conclusion of an aged philosopher, who says, "All that remains would be, to ask from science the means of changing our planet," consideration will dispel even this hope, assuring you that it must be the same above. Throughout those orbs of mingling light, amidst the

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* 258.

symphony of that temple, at whose immensity even soaring fancy staggers, such beings, resolved to defy power although omnipotent, seeking, as they proclaim already, beyond heaven's constellated wilderness, the unquiet republic of a maze of planets, struggling fierce against their Ruler, would introduce contradiction, war, and discord. They tell it to the world even now. They would invoke oceans of tempestuous fire to whelm on the conqueror and the conquered the desolated universe and the wreck of that for which they combated. One may believe them. If at last alone, pride and wrath would so confound them, that they would make their own selves the conquest of their fury. Instinctively, therefore, the harmoniously minded man, oppressed with the cares and sorrows of life, that would cherish hopes of a happier existence in another world, or merely seek the soothing influence of the contemplation of nature as she comes from God, manifested in the present, will exclaim, "Be advised,"—

μὴ σοφοῖς χαίρειν κακοῖς[*].

"And think not," he will add, "to turn me from the centre by casting doubts as to the reality of what is proclaimed by the great voice which issues from it—that there does exist a place of future rest, where disturbing forces, and even thoughts of revolt like that desired by infidels on this earth, are excluded for eternity."

But to return to a consideration of the sceptical philosophy as failing, through its inherent pride, to satisfy the intelligence. Those who take this road seem to have wandered back to the times when the doubts of the sophists were expressed by the chorus exclaiming, "Where is the mortal, after profoundest research, who can determine what is divine, and what is not[†]?" But, as the Italian poet says, "he who spreads nets may catch nothing; and he who seeks to be over-subtle loses himself." All that can be said of such philosophers was pronounced long ago by one who knew them: "Si aliquid pro virili portione secundum Deum consulas, veritatique, omnia occurrunt levia, varia, fucata; et quid dicam? Sola est illic simplex impudentia[‡]."

We are warned, nevertheless, by philosophy itself, against the pride of these minds that rise against the mysteries of the Catholic faith; and led to consider the shallowness of thought which rejects what is offered by it on the ground of its being either incommensurate with the proposed end, according to the view of men who are blind to the evidence, that throughout history Heaven seems to affect low and poor means to accomplish

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[*] Bacch. 1257.

[†] Helen. 1137.

[‡] Sidon. Epist. vii. 5.

its purposes; or of its being above reason, since nature itself abounds with mysteries that the profoundest investigators acknowledge no human intelligence can explain. Philosophy prompted an ancient poet to complain, that the pride of mortals sought to be wiser than God:—

> *'Αλλ' ἡ φρόνησις τοῦ θεοῦ μεῖζον σθένειν*
> *ζητεῖ· τὸ γαῦρον δ' ἐν φρεσὶν κεκτημένοι*
> *δοκοῦμεν εἶναι δαιμόνων σοφώτεροι*[*].

Plato, indeed, says, that the dog is naturally philosophic, as is seen in his barking at all those whom he does not know[†]; but, when the same philosopher speaks with disgust of those who imitate the sounds of animals[‡], he seems to warn us from too exact an imitation of the canine school. There are many things which we do not and cannot know, at which, nevertheless, it would be never well to bark like dogs. The sophists who object to Catholicism on the ground of its mysteries forget to observe, that mysteries, whether they will or no, surround them on all sides. Look no farther than the forest, and hear the chemist of vegetation saying, "The thickest veil covers the whole of these processes; and so far have philosophers hitherto been from removing this veil, that they have not been able even to approach it. That the same soil, the same atmosphere, the same extraneous agents of all kinds, should, in the leaves of grapes, produce a sweet and nutritious juice; whilst the crowfoot, and other weeds which grow among them, are filled with poisonous ones; that vine and a manchineel should grow side by side, the leaves of the one yielding a wholesome acid, whilst those of the other give forth a virulent poison—are circumstances which we know as facts, but which elude and baffle us when we inquire how, or why, they are such." Of the vital energy in plants we know nothing. But where is there a branch of human knowledge in which philosophers do not find themselves, on some points, utterly benighted? "Existence itself," says one of them, "remains a perfect enigma." "We cannot," says another, "penetrate to a knowledge of the substance or essence of any being or thing in the universe." Even the half-sceptical Montaigne says to them, "You that will have all solid deceive yourselves grossly. You believe yourselves rooted and grounded on adamant; and yet, if we uncover the last facts of our knowledge, you are spinning like bubbles on a river, you know not whither or whence; and you are bottomed, and capped, and wrapped in delusions." Swedenborg, we are told, thought as large a demand is made on our faith by nature as by

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[*] Eur. Sup. 216. [†] De Repub. i. [‡] Lib. iii.

miracles. Accordingly, it was one who had himself passed through the stages of credulity in regard to nature, and of scepticism towards God, who says, "J'étais devenu un esprit fort, c'est à dire, un esprit faible*." "Only superior minds," says Lopez de Vega, "will readily believe great things;" and therefore none should feel surprise at the throng we meet upon this road; for, ah! how the poor world is pestered with such diminutives of nature! Truly, it is not surprising that there are infidels in religion, since we find that men can pretend to doubt all things on earth. Hume would call in question even the truth of mathematical demonstration.

To men, therefore, who are on this road from a temptation inclining them to doubt, nature itself, by its mysteries, points to the truth of Catholicism, which, by proposing to our belief things above, though never contrary to, our reason, only presents an analogy with the whole creation around them. "This our life," says the Rule of St. Basil, "is a way which is narrowed by tribulations; for we are hemmed in on each side with danger to whichever side we turn; and therefore it is written, 'Ne declinaveris in dextram neque in sinistram;' and David says, 'Juxta semitam scandalum posuerunt mihi†.'"

"But then the evidence of religion," says a profound thinker, "not appearing obvious, may constitute one particular part of some men's trial in the religious sense; as it gives scope for a virtuous exercise, or vicious neglect, of their understanding, in examining or not examining into that evidence. There seems no possible reason to be given why we may not be in a state of moral probation, with regard to the exercise of our understanding upon the subject of religion, as we are with regard to our behaviour in common affairs. The former is as much a thing within our power and choice as the latter. And I suppose it is to be laid down for certain, that the same character, the same inward principle, which, after a man is convinced of the truth of religion, renders him obedient to the precepts of it, would, were he not thus convinced, set him about an examination of it, upon its system and evidence being offered to his thoughts, and that, in the latter state, his examination would be with an impartiality, seriousness, and solicitude proportionable to what his obedience is in the former. And, as inattention, negligence, want of all serious concern about a matter of such a nature and such importance, when offered to men's consideration, is, before a distinct conviction of its truth, as real immoral depravity and dissoluteness as neglect of religious practice after such conviction; so active solicitude about it, and fair impartial consideration of its evidence, before such conviction, is as really an exercise

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* Chateaub. Mém.

† Reg. S. Basilii, cap. cxl.

of a morally right temper, as is religious practice after. Thus, that religion is not intuitively true, but a matter of deduction and inference; that a conviction of its truth is not forced upon every one, but left to be by some collected with heedful attention to premises; this as much constitutes religious probation, as much affords sphere, scope, opportunity for right or wrong behaviour as any thing whatever does. Speculative difficulties are, in this respect, of the very same nature with external temptations. For the evidence of religion not appearing obvious is, to some persons, a temptation to reject it without any consideration at all, and therefore requires such an attentive exercise of the virtuous principle seriously to consider that evidence, as there would be no occasion for but for such temptation. If there are any persons who never set themselves heartily and in earnest to be informed in religion, if there are any who secretly wish it may not prove true, and are less attentive to evidence than to difficulties, and more to objections than to what is said in answer to them, these persons will scarce be thought in a likely way of seeing the evidence of religion, though it were most certainly true and capable of being ever so fully proved*."

A consideration of the second cause of infidelity, to which allusion has already been made in the above passages, can lead to no less a recognition of the truth of the Catholic religion, by showing the divine excellence of that morality against which some men, wishing to run counter, stumble, and are precipitated into the gulf which sin invokes for its victims. "The truth of the Christian religion," says Savonarola, "is supported by such reasons, that no one, unless he be deficient in understanding, will refuse to submit to them—ut nullus, nisi fatuus sit, illis collum non subdat †." It is the fool that in his heart denies the God who is the author of nature and revelation. We call a nettle but a nettle, and the faults of fools but folly. Paul Sgobba, of Genoa, born blind, could find, by the touch, in trees and flowers, that they were a perpetual witness of the existence, power, and wisdom of God, and of his love for men, and that all created things proclaimed his presence. A study of the trees alone furnish, in fact, sufficient evidence. The structure of their roots and fibres—the contrivance displayed in the package of their buds, no human skill being able to fold so much within so small a compass—the provision for the change of season and climate, as when the horse chesnut, in its native land of India, has no hybernacula, but expands its buds without them, while on coming into our colder regions we find each of its buds protected by its scaly covering—the structure of climbing and winding stems,

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* Butler's Analogy, ii.

† Savon. de Veritate Fidei Christ. lib. ii.

the spiral growth denying the agency of any extraneous cause in producing it, the convolution of the tendrils so artificial, that a late writer says, " I think it impossible to unwind them without admiring veneration,"—these are proofs intelligible to all but such as are mentally and obstinately blind. Thus the forest school recognises the justice of what Savonarola says. But the folly which is produced by transgressing the moral law is not confined to a few men; the resistance of the passions is incalculable, and accordingly the result is the wide-spreading infidelity that covers now the world, in which are many Rochesters, who, as Johnson said of the cowardly poet, "lose all sense of religious restraint, and, finding it not convenient to admit the authority of laws which they are resolved not to obey, shelter their wickedness behind infidelity." If pride causes infidelity by tempting man to soar beyond his power, sin leads to it as directly by rendering him anxious to escape from the knowledge of his own dignity, which, says Pascal, " is, in regard to nothing, infinite ;" for he begins by denying that his position in the universe can be reconciled with the exalted station in regard to it, which the Catholic religion ascribes to him. But the doctrine of the incarnation is not inconsistent with a scientific knowledge of the human position. The Catholic doctrine recognises how little is man on the atom on which he moves—but it points out how great is his intelligence. He knows at what hour return comets after thousands of years—he who lives but an instant! Microscopic insect, invisible in a plait of the robe of heaven, the planets cannot hide from him one of their steps in the immeasurable depths of space. " Man is but a reed, the weakest that exists in nature; but," adds Pascal, " it is a reed that thinks. The universe has not to be armed to destroy him—a breath, a drop suffice to kill him ; but, if the universe should overwhelm him, man would be greater than his destroyer, for he knows that he dies; whereas, of the advantage that it has over him the universe knows nothing." Led, however, by sin, to compare themselves to the beasts that perish, men embrace the errors of infidelity through a systematic choice of corresponding manners. If God exists, they declare that He is too great to take cognisance of them. " Omnes vias ejus intelligere noluerunt ;" for, adds St. Odo, " they esteem impunity in sinning the consequence of ignorance *."

" Quid est veritas?" asked Pilate. "He had no great anxiety to know it," remarks the Père de Ligny, "for he did not wait for the answer. No wonder. Pilate was a great man of the world, and he understood vaguely that this truth related to morality or to religion." Many of all ranks bring themselves

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* Mor. in Job, xxv.

to this state; then all testimony, divine and human, is rejected without a hearing. Miracles are ignored—evidence by human witnesses ignored, or the contradictions of the ignorant weighed against the affirmations of the most intelligent. But what folly is this to set no value on human testimony! to overlook the amazing attributes of the human mind, or to limit them to the sphere of pure science! The common consent of astronomers sometimes proclaims that on a certain day, hour, and minute, the sun will be eclipsed over our proud metropolis; and the event is an exact fulfilment of their prediction. The common consent of theologians proclaims that on the day, hour, and minute when you die, you will see all the affirmations of the Catholic religion verified; that, as the poet says,

> —— "The rest you will admit in Hades."

Why do you not believe the latter as you believed the former? Mark, that in astronomy you do not regard what common unscientific people say; why then, in theology, do you deem the affirmations of the same class conclusive? You would not trust your own individual judgment in contradicting the mathematician, why do you hold it infallible when opposed to the divine?

"Direct hatred of God is rare," says the Père de Ligny; "but nothing is more common than indirect hatred of God, as when He is hated as legislator and judge, in his laws and in his judgments. The hatred of revelation, of the Church and of its ministers, is that which approaches the nearest to the direct hatred[†]." "When a young man," says Plato, "ill brought up, and nourished in the love of gain, has once tasted the honey of the two-legged stinging drones, and been in the company of these greedy insects, skilful to excite in him desires of all sorts, his interior government becomes democratic. Bad desires take, in fine, the citadel of the young man's soul, when they perceive that it is void of knowledge, of worthy habits, and of true maxims, which are the surest and most faithful guards of reason. Then false and presumptuous judgments run in a crowd from all sides, and enter the place, and close the gates to prevent any succour from without, sent by wise councillors. The victory being gained, modesty is expelled as imbecility, temperance is banished with insult as cowardice, along with moderation and frugality. When the soul is thus emptied, they take formal possession, and initiate it, as it were, in great mysteries, leading with it a long train triumphantly crowned, composed of insolence, and anarchy, and licentiousness, disguised under specious names, and then all the avenues of the citadel are closed against wisdom[†]." Then, as Seneca says, "emendare mavult Deum quam se."

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[*] Hist. de J. C.

[†] De Repub. viii.

That a person who deliberately apostatises from the Catholic faith is not merely mistaken in his judgment, but deeply criminal in his moral nature, is a proposition which offends men who have caught the tune of these times without being susceptible of other harmony; though it would require only the genius and deep thought of the ancient sages to perceive that the conclusion is inevitable, if the truth on which the idea of revelation depends be once admitted. When Plato began to speak about the impious men who disbelieve the gods, his discourse became so elevated, that Clinias, to whom he speaks, says that it resembles a prayer. "How," exclaims the sage, "can one, without indignation, see one's self reduced to the necessity of proving the existence of the gods?—*ἀνάγκη γὰρ δὴ χαλεπῶς φέρειν καὶ μισεῖν ἐκείνους οἳ τούτων ἡμῖν αἴτιοι τῶν λόγων γεγένηνται καὶ γίγνονται.* One must hate the men who render such discussions necessary. Formerly docile to the religious lessons, which from infancy they have sucked in with their milk, which they have heard from their nurses and their mothers—*οὓς ἐκ νέων παίδων ἔτι ἐν γάλαξι τρεφόμενοι, τροφῶν τε ἤκουον καὶ μητέρων*, lessons of enchantment given to them one time in play, at another in seriousness, in the midst of sacrifices hearing and seeing their parents at their prayers, assisting at the spectacles, so striking and beautiful to youth, with which the sacrifices are accompanied; witnesses of the earnest piety of their parents while sacrificing for themselves and their children, and thereby evincing so deep a conviction of the existence of the gods, they see how profoundly convinced of their existence are both Greeks and barbarians, worshipping them on all occasions, whether in prosperity or adversity—*οὐχ ὡς οὐκ ὄντων, ἀλλ' ὡς ὅτι μάλιστα ὄντων, καὶ οὐδαμῇ ὑποψίαν ἐνδιδόντων ὡς οὐκ εἰσὶ θεοί.* And now, in spite of all this—*οὐδὲ ἐξ ἑνὸς ἱκανοῦ λόγου*, as all agree who have the least common sense, they force us to say what we say! How could any one in mild words be able to instruct such men, and prove to them that there are gods! *Τολμητέον δέ*, since it is not necessary for us like them to be mad through the indignation with which they fill us*." What is left for the Christian philosopher to add to this noble expression of a lofty intelligence and a devoted heart? Nevertheless, if apostasy be regarded with reference to the Catholic religion, these grounds for holding in horror the impiety which turns from it, assume a character of far greater extension. The objections advanced by those who plead in its extenuation are admirably refuted by a modern writer, remarkable for mental penetration and the fearless development of a practical and manly intelligence †. "The difficulty that has been started arises," he says, "in this way. The objector knows, or thinks

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* De Legibus, lib. x.

† Lucas.

he knows, a person brought up as a Catholic; after a time beset with doubts; applying to the resolution of those doubts all the energies of an honest intellect; failing to clear them up; and sinking into apostasy from a sheer inability to make good to the intellect the teachings of the Infallible Church. 'Shall I,' says our objector, 'conclude this person to be guilty of crime, if he has really canvassed the subject with heartfelt sincerity and earnestness? or can I assume to be insincere one of whose mental honesty I am as firmly assured as I am of my own? I find it impossible to do either of these things; and I am, therefore, constrained to believe that such a one has fallen in spite of himself, and that his apostasy, being honest, has brought with it no stain of guilt or crime.'

"Now, though we believe a case of this kind is not very frequent, yet, for the purpose of exposing the unsoundness of this reasoning, it is precisely such a case as this that we wish to grapple with. Let us then suppose the apostasy to be free from all temptation of self-interest; that the intellect alone has been concerned in it; that the intellect has done its task zealously and honestly; and that it really has weighed the evidence submitted to it with all the scrupulosity of a Jansenist. Be it so.

"But, if it be so, what then? If this indifferency of the intellect were all that is necessary to the attainment of religious knowledge, we should then have a new beatitude not set down in St. Matthew's Gospel—not known to the teaching of the Church. It would then be written, 'Blessed are they of clear, penetrating intellect, and of unbiassed logical powers, for they shall see God.' But now, so differently are these things arranged by the Almighty Disposer, a quite different gospel is preached to us; and the kernel of it is something utterly opposed to this imaginary beatitude. The words of our Saviour are express—'Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God.' The vision of God, the highest gift and faculty of the soul, is the reward, not of a clear, impartial intellect, but of a clean heart. When, then, we are told of the honest intellect swerving from the truth, we answer, that if the man saw only with his intellect he was of necessity blind. A zeal for the discovery of truth, and an honest use of the natural understanding for its discernment, are good things in their way, and assuredly we do not mean to despise or undervalue them. But the objection we are considering supposes that they are sufficient, and that the person who has zealously and honestly used his understanding for the discovery of truth, and has failed, is therefore free from blame. A most fatal delusion!

"In the first place, the discernment of the truths of religion is not within the scope of the natural understanding; nor is this its province in any shape. 'The natural (or sensual) man,' says

the Apostle, 'perceiveth not the things that are of the spirit of God, for it is foolishness to him; neither can he understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.' It is, then, not the natural man; not the human understanding, however upright; but the spiritual faculty by which alone religious truth can be grasped and appropriated. To set the natural understanding in quest of spiritual truths, is like using the ears to see, or the eyes to hear; and to protest that the man who has used his intellect honestly, and has failed to remain a Catholic, is therefore guiltless, is like saying of a man who has bandaged his eyes that he is blameless for not seeing, because he has most zealously strained his ears to discern the objects that are around him.

"The important question, then, is not how the apostate has used his intellect, but how he has employed his whole spiritual nature, of which his natural intellect is merely one of the upper and nobler servants. His sincerity, in the vulgar sense of the word, is a very small thing indeed compared with this. Nay, the sincerity of his apostasy may be the very measure and punishment of his guilt. When his heart is darkened, and corrupted by sensuality or pride, and the grace of God is withdrawn from him, then the eyes of his mind become blinded, so that he cannot see; and his intellect, instead of being the servant of God, becomes the bondslave of hell, doing the work of the devil the more faithfully, the more honestly and zealously it works. It is impossible to imagine a more awful and pitiable condition for a human soul than that in which, having once known the truth, it has fallen from it, and the intellectual conscience has become so perfectly purblind that it honestly, and without a shadow of doubt or compunction, mistakes light for darkness, truth for error, heaven for hell; when the poor enslaved soul sleeps in so terrible a security, that not even one uneasy dream is vouchsafed to give it warning of its approaching fate; when the fall of the spiritual nature has been so complete that not a pulse beats, not a breath issues forth to announce the presence of even an imperfect life, and to give hopes of a better issue. Whether so complete a fall as this be within the compass of possibility is more than we can determine; but that, if it ever could occur, it would be a most terrible judgment of God, there cannot be the least doubt.

"Spiritual 'understanding,' says the old Hebrew prophet; 'Faith,' says the Christian dispensation, is a gift of the Holy Ghost. It is a gift, mind, not an acquirement; and its whole scope and purpose has reference far more to the moral than to the intellectual nature of man. It is a supernatural endowment, the lasting possession of which cannot be secured by keeping the intellect bright, or by the honest use of the understanding. It may be forfeited by any spiritual delinquency. Pride may

root it out; uncleanness may blind the eyes of the soul; gluttony may make torpid its sense; an ungrateful neglect of the extraordinary graces of the Holy Ghost may kindle God's anger; or a carelessness in the use of the ordinary Sacramental helps may cause the life of the soul to languish and wither away. By any of these modes, and by more methods than we can enumerate, faith may be forfeited, and the grace of God withdrawn; and, when this is so, what honesty of the intellect, what zeal in hunting out the materials for a sound judgment, what impartiality in the weighing of evidence, what groping in the dark of the poor benighted human intellect, can suffice either to merit the restoration of the good gift, or to discover, without light from heaven, that upon which no mere earthly candle can shed so much as one solitary ray?

"When, then, good Catholic reader, you are told, or are disposed to believe, that the apostate was earnest and sincere, and honestly obeyed his convictions in deserting the Church—a matter, by the way, with regard to which you may be very deeply mistaken when you are most confident of your ground—bethink yourself of the many other chances to which he may have been subject. Was he humble? Was he chaste? Was he instant in prayer? regular in the performance of his duties? frequent in his approach to the Sacraments? docile to the teaching of authority? And did he lead in all respects, so far as human frailty will permit, a pure, holy, spotless, and edifying life? These things you cannot know. You cannot; therefore, it is impossible for you to judge the individual case; to know what kind of blame may attach to the individual apostate; or to discern from what secret sin, hidden beneath the veil of a decent exterior, his miserable ruin may have proceeded. Let it be enough for you to know and believe the teaching of the Church, that no such ruin can be blameless; that no one who has led such a life as we have just described ever fell, or ever can fall into this terrible abyss; and seeing, even in the enumeration already given, how many are the approaches to infidelity, flee every habitual sin like a pestilence, and bethink yourself now, at this instant, that perhaps the next deliberate sin, of whatever kind, with which you stain your soul, may for you be made the not very remote occasion of a sad and shameful apostasy."

"Treat not with a man without religion concerning holiness," says the sacred text *. An English writer says, "In general it will not be requisite to answer these men, but only to discover them; for reason they have none, but lust and licentiousness, and therefore answer can have none. It is not any discipline that they could live under, it is the corruption and remissness of

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* Prov.

discipline that they seek." Nevertheless, let us await their advance, and watch their movements. There is a class of learned writers in the van, whose ruling idea is to resist the doctrine of future punishment, taught by the Church and worked upon by Dante, and to represent it as something "contradictory to good feeling in matters divine as well as human"—as an instance of "the frightful bigotry of the schools,"—of the "ferocity that is mistaken for wisdom and piety"—of the "horrors of superstition, from which millions of feeble minds are suffering at this moment all over the world." These writers proceed to thank heaven that Dante's Hell "has not embittered the mild reading-desks of the Church of England; and that, as George III. himself could not endure the creed of St. Athanasius, so the inscription over Dante's Hell-gate would only excite disgust in the gentle chapels of Queen Victoria, from which" they pray "that the foul fiends of inhumanity and superstition may be ever far." As for Dante's Vision, the world is reminded by them, that Sir Walter Scott could not read him with pleasure, and that he tells Miss Seward that its plan appeared to him "unhappy;" and they conclude, saying that, "when they think of the beautiful and tranquil books of philosophy lately written, opening the peacefullest hopes for mankind, his Vision, in a theological point of view, seems no better than the dream of an hypochondriacal savage, and a rottenness to be spit out of the mouth." "If the belief ever had its use in alarming ruffian passions and barbarously ignorant times, an age arrives when a beneficent Providence permits itself to be better understood, and dissipates the superfluous horror."

A voice from the mediæval cloisters, like the sound of a mysterious bell over the forest, seems to pronounce here an awful and most just response, crying with St. Bruno, "O folly, O impiety, O madness! Although day by day uttereth the word, although truth itself, by the Son of God and by wisdom, is manifested, for wisdom preaches in the streets, yet the night does not blush to indicate its science, or rather its ignorance; for still do the scribes and Pharisees preach, being blind leaders of the blind, immerging themselves and others in the shades of the ignorance of night; for the night can only impart error, and ignorance, and darkness*." "It has not been proved," says Schiller's infidel, "that there is an eye above this earth, to take account of what passes on it. But, then, whence this fearful whisper to my soul? Is there really an avenging judge above the stars? No, no! Yet why creeps this shudder through my frame? Why this fearful monitor within, bearing witness that there is one above the stars who judgeth? All is empty, lonely,

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* De Novo Mundo.

desolate beyond the stars. I say it is so. Miserable subterfuge! Alas! if there should be something in it after all? If there should be one above the stars who will call me to account for all my sins, for every sorrow that I have caused to others, for every joy that I have poisoned, for every perfection that I have intercepted?" Scepticism, in fact, is often thus self-refuted. "I can transport myself in imagination to my last moments," said a French infidel, "but I cannot bring my imagination to picture any thing beyond them. I can think of dying; but for the minute or second which will follow death I have always had an indefinable horror—I have remarked the same impossibility in others. Further than their last earthly impression they refuse to look, as if it were a precipice of ten thousand feet opened beneath them. To chase this fearful sight they will brave any thing *." But "blind fear, that seeing reason leads, finds safer footing than blind reason stumbling without fear." To fear the worst, oft cures the worst. Though it does not fall within the object of this wandering to hear how any particular errors against faith can be disproved, it may be well to remark, in passing, that a denial of future punishment is an indefensible position, when men are confronted with the universal traditions of the human race, and with the Catholic doctrine, which contains nothing that the reason of man can overthrow. An exclusion of all idea of divine power, manifested by punishment, seems irreconcilable with an observation of facts. The sudden and general catastrophes which overtake mankind in different forms of destruction, must involve considerations of justice as well as of mercy. Sixty thousand human beings perished in the space of a few seconds in Sicily, in 1693; from thirty to forty thousand at Riobamba, in 1797; and perhaps five times as many in Asia Minor and Syria, under Tiberius and the elder Justinian. Unless all providential power be denied, these events must be viewed as having been under a divine control. The eternity of punishment after death is explained by theologians on this ground: "quòd, non cessante peccato, non potest cessare pœna," St. Gregory the Great says; "quòd damnati pœnas æternas luant quia Deus per scientiam quandam mediæ ad finem, prævidit semper fuisse peccaturos, si semper in terra victuri fuissent." Leibnitz, rejecting the explanation of Le Clerc, supposes the reason of man's eternal punishment to be "quia non utitur auxilio gratiæ ad resurgendum." He says also, "that the reprobate, even when feeling their misery, continue for ever to love their condition, preferring its endurance to the thought of ceasing to be what they are." Without any remembrance, probably, of such expla-

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* Armand Carrel, ap. Chateaub. Mém. vi.

nations, the poet ascribes in the Giaour to his dying wretch the words,—

"I would not, if I might, be blest."

To the new moral doctrines in general the words of Cicero may be applied, "Sunt nonnullæ disciplinæ, quæ propositis bonorum et malorum finibus officium omne pervertunt *." The views of infidelity may be cited as examples of the result, so deprecated by Cato, of certain minds applying to literature, as when he said of the Greek physicians, "Nequissimum et indocile genus illorum, et hoc puta vatem dixisse, quandocunque ista gens suas literas dabit, omnia corrumpet. Tum etiam magis, si medicos suos huc mittet †." "You know not the cause of these impious opinions," says Plato; "you think that the sole source of impious life is lawless passion and a thirst for pleasure; but there is another cause, which no one can divine, who lives apart from the Greeks. What is this? *'Αμαθία τις μάλα χαλεπὴ, δοκοῦσα εἶναι μεγίστη φρόνησις*—a fearful ignorance, under the name of highest wisdom ‡." This is easily combined with the grosser evil of a general lascivious apprehension, to which the negations used by infidelity can more generally be traced.

——— "Veteris contagia morbi
Hausimus, et quodam simili languore tenemur;
Sordida produxit vetitos comœdia ludos."

——— "Unde trahunt juvenilia pectora pestem
Mortiferam; fiuntque ipsæ sine fronte puellæ.
I pudor in villas, si non patiuntur easdem,
Et villæ vomicas; urbs est jam tota lupanar §."

But it is time to look again for some direction. The infidelity which is associated with licentious manners presents an issue to the Catholic religion, by proving how fatal is the liberty which involves a renouncement of its restraints.

St. Paul the hermit, on his way to find St. Anthony, met with divers wild savage animals; but they served only to direct him to the residence of the blessed saint of whom he was so anxiously in search; and, being thus guided, he at length reached his cave. So, in this wilderness, the man-wolf, the man-ape or hog, and the man-tiger, will sometimes direct wanderers to the pure, peaceful spot that is often long sought for, unwillingly, by the human mind. What forms of perverted

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* De Off. lib. i. 2.
† Ap. Plin. N. H. xxix. 7.
‡ De Legibus, lib. x.
§ Bapt. Mant. de Sacris Diebus Feb.

nature meet us here! As if common language were inadequate to describe them, one might borow the lines of Alanus Magnus, and say,—

——— "Esse pudicum
Jam cunctis pudor est. Absque pudore
Humanos hominis exuit usus
Non humanus homo. Degener ergo
Bruti degeneres induit actus,
Et sic exhominans exhominandus*."

It will be as difficult to deny the truth of the picture, as to disprove the justice of the sentiment ascribed to nature :—

"Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity."

The sensual proclaim their belief that Catholicism is for ever fallen—"at quemadmodum!" exclaims the Roman orator of a certain representative of such men, "quam audacter! quam libidinose! quam impudenter†! You talk of fugitive slaves; but these were not," he continues, addressing him, "so much slaves of their masters, as you are the slave of your lusts; nor they so fugitive from their masters, as you from justice and law; nor they so barbarous in language and nation, as you in nature and manners; nor they so much enemies to men, as you to the God of heaven‡." And whom will not such infidels despise? Like the robbers slain by Theseus, these sophists will believe, with brutal men, that others are virtuous only through fear. For, loving monks and monasteries, St. Louis is styled by Legrand d'Aussy, "l'un des souverains les plus médiocres, et même l'un des plus funestes qu'ait eus la France." By such handicraft as this, what may not be transformed? These men will naturally and inevitably approve of the instructions which teach them to conquer pleasure, as Plato says, "not by avoiding, but by tasting it§." "Sed quid insanius," says a Catholic writer, "quàm a Platone et Aristotele discedentem Epicuro inhærere, damnato jampridem homini, atque, ut ita dixerim, in philosophia hæretico‖?" These men will be driven headlong, till their last hope may be expressed in the words of the desponding poet,—

"Atque utinam pereant animæ cum corpore nostræ ¶."

"These, nevertheless, enwrap themselves," says Plato, "in a

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* De Planctu Naturæ.
† In Ver. II. iv.
‡ II. lib. iv.
§ De Leg. i.
‖ Leonard. Arret. Epist. lib. v. 2.
¶ Trist. iii.

covering composed of the shadow and exterior of virtue, drawing after them the cunning and deceitful fox of the sage Archilochus*."

> "I, verbis virtutem illude superbis†."

But, as the old adage says,—

> "Chascun garde son estandart
> Quant oyez prescher le regnart."

"Of clear malice, and obscure love," says Sidonius, "they hasten to the knowledge of posterity by their hatred of virtues—tamen ad notitiam posterorum per odia virtutum decurrerunt‡." Their hatred of the holy indicates the near affinity which binds them to the men who said, with Milton, that the Jesuits were public enemies. "The Jesuits," he says, "are indeed the only corrupters of youth and good learning: and I have heard many wise and learned men in Italy say as much."

These "wise and learned men of Italy" have many disciples on the present road, whose hatred of all orders, and of the monasteries, makes evident, as Balmes remarks, "that the infidel philosophy is the daughter of the Reformation§." Both are now met promiscuously joined in one common fellowship, and girt—

> "With all the grisly legions that troop
> Under the sooty flag of Acheron."

All monks, and priests, and pontiffs, are singled out for hatred—"quos non parsimonia," to use ancient words, "non continentia, non virtus, non labor, non splendor tueri potuit contra illius helluonis et prædonis audaciam||."

We, too, have our Guillaume de Saint Amour's, who compose their works on the perils of these times; their perils being the Jesuits, the regular clergy in general, learned and devout bishops, and all priests—sanctity, sacrifice, voluntary poverty, a life of religious contemplation, labour, and prayer. One is tempted to ask ironically with Schiller's Moser, "Can mere priestly cant excite a philosopher to such a pitch of frenzy? Why not blow it away with a breath of your lips? Can the work of fools and madmen cause you such uneasiness? Why not ignore it altogether?" Infidelity, however, watches the pontiff or the monk as Satan observed the angels guarding man in Paradise, and says,—

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* De Repub. lib. ii.

† Æn. ix. 634.

‡ Sid. Apol. Epist. lib. viii. 1.

§ Ch. 38.

|| De Provinciis Consul.

——— "Of these the vigilance
I dread; and to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour, glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find
The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring."

The needful serpent is found here in every shade. It lies in the little cheap book for the people, in the poem for the young, in the leading journal for the slavish crowd. Socrates would admit of no other poems but hymns in honour of the gods and the praises of great men. The voluptuous Muse, whether epic or lyric, he excludes totally*; but the sensual civilization admits of no restrictions; and, accordingly, the malice of the enemy finds on all sides a medium suitable to itself, through which it can glide stealthily in to deceive the nations. So, having stamped this canker on their youth, it does abandon them; and then rise in their desert hearts fierce wants, and mad disquietudes, and shadows idle of unreal good, which levy mutual war. "Dum negat hæc, videt beatum," says Martial of Selius, who denied the Deity, and sought to disprove his existence. So many now are prompted by their fear to deny God. In regard to all but religious truth, perhaps, proficients; but herein falling thus; as Ethra says of one who had contracted the disease of impiety,—

Σφάλλει γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ μόνῳ, τ' ἄλλ' εὖ φρονῶν†.

And yet, what can all their sciences avail to give them true content?—"nihil enim egentius illa mente, quæ de Deo extra Deum philosophatur†." In regard to the infidel's mind, so far as it is affected by scepticism, the suggestion that we find in Dante, in reference to the avaricious man, might be urged:—

"That, better to denote its littleness,
The writing should be letters maim'd, that speak
Much in a narrow space§."

Rupertus thinks that the words, "Ecce, Adam quasi unus ex nobis factus est, sciens bonum et malum," were said ironically; for it is of God alone to have the knowledge of good and evil, who knows also how to use evil. Similarly the devil is called ironically "cherub" in Ezekiel, which means, plenitude of science‖. Ite potius ad vendentes et emite vobis. "These seem," says St. Bruno, citing them, "to be words, not of com-

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* De Repub. x.
† Supp. 303.
‡ S. Diadochus de Perfect. Spiritual. c. 7.
§ Par. 19.
‖ De Divinis Officiis, lib. xi. 18.

passion, but of ridicule. But what wonder is it if they should be ridiculed by the members of Christ, whom Christ himself, as the Psalmist says, will laugh at?—'qui habitat,' he says, 'in cœlis irridebit eos*.'" They go, indeed, to buy from every shop, still seeking to disprove and to contradict. But what they bring back is not the philosophy of life. Their thoughts and occupation are those of the raven:—

"Semper hiat corvus, semperque cadavera captat,
Semper amat mortem; mors quoque pascit eum."

How should the negations of such men, often with conscience wide as hell, astonish? What St. Gregory of Tours said of the Jews is seen verified in the immoral progeny of Christians: "There remaineth in their breasts, I do not say the veil with which the face of Moses was shaded, but a wall†." They hesitate not to avow, that "their soul has long learned to prefer hell's freedom to the servitude of heaven." "Oh, but if they would only hear such and such discourses," you exclaim, "they would renounce their insane wisdom." So some one asks in Plato's Republic, saying, "If they hear this, will it not contribute to make them gentle?" To whom Socrates replies, "Yes, if they will hear reason‡." But he knew them well, when, by an affirmative, he sought to express the vanity of such expectations. "We care not to know" is heard on all sides, as when in hell diabolic words

——— "shouted together all the cursed crew."

In the play of Calderon, El Magico Prodigioso, where Cypriano presses the demon to confess the true God, the demon, driven to the point, tries to depart, saying, "I know nothing about it—I know nothing about it;" and, still further pressed with his own avowals, makes no other answer but "I know nothing about it." They are content with general contradictions, with sweeping negations, horrible from the lips of men, whose very faces often betray them; so that one might say of many, as Peter of Blois says of the Jews, "Nec solum in eorum codicibus sed in vultibus eorum Christi legimus passionem§." "Not yet are dead," says St. Bruno, "all who seek the life of Christ, and endeavour to kill his name and faith in the hearts of the faithful‖." "Tam mali estis qui evertitis evangelium," says St. Augustin, "ut si Christus videretur iterum crucifigeretur." "Were Christ to walk again on earth, and preach upon Mont-

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* S. Brun. Exposit. de Confessoribus.

† Hist. lib. v. 10.

‡ lib. vi.

§ Pet. Bles. cont. Perfid. Judæor.

‖ S. Brun. in Oct. Epiph.

martre," said the late curate of St. Roch, "you would vote for his being again crucified." The stranger heard him say so. This road is thronged at present with those who seek, as Rupertus says, "to fulfil the desire of their father—that is, to kill Christ*;" who hope too, as the abbot Joachim says, "ut nomen ejus non memoretur ultra†." So proclaimed the sophists of the last century, till, like the giants of old, they were overwhelmed by the very rocks which they hurled against heaven.

But, having observed some of the general causes of infidelity, and the issues to a recognition of Catholicity as the central truth, by an estimate of their evil, let us proceed to mark the consequences of unbelief, which, in their turn, produce fresh causes with an infinite progression, till principle and effect are indistinguishable. These consequences constitute three openings to reveal the truth of the Catholic religion—according to their threefold division, into social, moral, and political, as affecting individuals, civilization, and states.

Cardan, who was neither a priest nor a Jesuit, endeavours to explain, by physical causes, why philosophers are often the worst men‡. He takes for granted that they often are; and no clear-sighted observer, after the first enthusiasm of youth for words has cooled down, will form a lower estimate of his intelligence for having done so; "quoniam," to use Pliny's words, as true now as when he wrote them, "nullis vitiis desunt pretiosa nomina§." "I see the pretension, but not the philosopher," says Herodes with Aulus Gellius, in his Attic Nights, adding, "Illud mihi maxime dolori et ægritudini est, quod istius modi animalia spurca et probrosa, nomen usurpent sanctissimum, et Philosophi appellentur." He would be less susceptible, perhaps, had he lived later, on hearing such a name usurped. What was then called most holy may be now left to any one that will stoop to pick it up to serve for covering to his naked turpitude.

"Let all untruths stand by that stained name,
And they'll seem glorious."

"If these deniers of God," says a noble French author, "were great men, the authority of their judgment ought to have weight; but these men, in pulling each other to pieces, declare themselves mutually a party of scoundrels. See what Roland says of Condorcet; what Barbaroux thinks of Marat; what Camille Desmoulins writes against Saint Just. Is Danton to be estimated according to the opinion of Robespierre, or Robespierre according to that of Danton? When these men have so

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[*] Rup. de Victoria Verbi Dei, xii. 3.

[†] Sup. Hierem.

[‡] Card. de Subtil. fol. 467.

[§] N. H. lib. xxxvii. 12.

poor an idea of each other, how, without failing in the respect due to them, should one have an opinion different from theirs?" If we had to cancel from the writings of men who, at present, assume the title of philosopher, as Socrates would take from Homer all the lines injurious to the minds of their readers as those, "Alas! there remaineth of us, after death, nought but a vain image and a shade," this whole class of literature might be comprised in a small volume. "Their discourses, whether real or imaginary," as Socrates observed, "are not calculated to inspire our youth with moderation; and, if they inspire them with a different character, one cannot," as he says, "be surprised *."

"In truth," as Schiller says, "vice is here beheld in its innermost workings. In these philosophers it resolves all the confused terrors of conscience into wild abstractions, destroys virtuous sentiments by dissecting them, and holds up the earnest voice of religion to mockery and scorn. These are they who have gone so far (a distinction by no means enviable) as to quicken their understanding at the expense of their soul; to them the holiest things are no longer holy; to them God and man are alike indifferent; and both worlds are as nothing." Such are the men who propose to make a new world, and who have in part succeeded. "In all ages there were crimes; but," as Chateaubriand says, "they were not committed in cold blood, as now, in consequence of the loss of religion. At present they cause no remorse; they are deemed a consequence of the march of the times. If they were otherwise thought of formerly, the reason is, we are told, that the world was not then sufficiently advanced in the knowledge of man. Crimes are analysed now, tried in crucibles in order to see what utility can be drawn from them, as chemistry finds ingredients in putrefaction. Corruptions of mind, far otherwise destructive than those of the senses, are accepted as necessary results; they belong no more to some perverse individuals; they are fallen into the public domain." "Be men like blasted woods!" cries Timon, cursing all. "Look thee, 'tis so here!"

O thou fearful form, which vain mortals worship now under the name of Rationalism!

> "Who-ever by consulting at thy shrine
> Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct
> To fly or follow what concern'd him most,
> And run not sooner to his fatal snare?"

Plutarch had a wicked slave, immoral and audacious, "sed disputationibus philosophicis aures imbutas habens." Menedemus used to say of a certain philosopher, *φιλόσοφος μέν τοι τοιοῦτος*,

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* De Repub. lib. iii.

ἀνὴρ δὲ καὶ τῶν ὄντων καὶ τῶν γενησομένων κάκιστος[*]. Cæsius, so unamiable and selfish, was an Epicurean. With the poet, our first mother, the moment after eating the apple which represents the evil in its essence, becomes selfish, and talks of "keeping the odds of knowledge in her power without copartner." We cannot delay to follow this sad anatomy through all the horrible details. Some great facts are prominent, and we must notice them. Infidelity infuses hatred till it overflows, so that every word reveals it. "Say what is just, but not with hatred," says the school of God—

> *'Ανδρός τοι τὸ μὲν εὖ δίκαιον εἰπεῖν,*
> *εἰπόντος δὲ, μὴ φθονερὰν*
> *ἐξῶσαι γλώσσας ὀδύναν*[†].

To say what is false with hatred characterizes the opposition school. "Juste damnabuntur," says the rule of St. Columban, "qui justa dicere noluerunt cum potuerunt; sed mala, injusta, impia, inania, injuriosa, incerta, falsa, contentiosa, contumeliosa, turpia, fabulosa, blasphema, aspera, ac fluctuosa loqui garrula verbositate maluerunt[‡]." "Who is not horror-struck," demands the ancient poet,

> *Μεγάλα μεγαληγόρων κλύων ἀνο-*
> *σίων ἀνδρῶν*[§];

This concert, infidelity seems to say, is for my victim; I glory in its shame: it is folly, delirium, despair. It is the hymn of the furies which chains souls; it is the hymn without the lyre, whose poison consumes mortals,—

> *Ὕμνος ἐξ 'Ερινύων*[‖].

We, on the other hand, may say of it, in the words of the patriarch Jacob, "Maledictus furor eorum quia pertinax, et indignatio eorum quia dura[¶]." Falsehood and deception, as avowed arts, are no less consequences of initiation into this brotherhood, "mendaciis et fallacia," as the Roman author said, "quasi præclaris artibus gaudens." Socrates observed Thrasymachus blush for the first time on being obliged to admit his proposition concerning justice[**]. He was not so far advanced as later sophists, who are of the confraternity of St. Hubert, as the old adage says, meaning men who have not to run mad to lie, and who seem to have for maxim the words of Reynard the Fox, "the more for-

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[*] Diog. Laert.
[†] Philoctet. 1140.
[‡] Reg. St. Columb. cap. ii. ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg. i.
[§] Æsch. Sept. cont. Theb. 565.
[‖] Eumenid. 328.
[¶] Gen. 49.
[**] De Repub. lib. i.

sworn the less forlorn." "There are absences of memory, or falsehoods, which cause terror," says a great French author, alluding to an infidel. "Hearing him speak, you open your ears; you rub your eyes, not knowing whether you are deceived sleeping or waking. When the utterer of these imperturbable assertions descends from the tribune and sits down impassible in his place, your eyes follow him, suspended as you are between a kind of terror and a sort of admiration; you do not know if this man may not have received from nature such an authority that he has the power to reconstitute or to annihilate truth[*]." Voltaire, writing to Thiriot, on the 21st of October, in 1736, used these words, which one may scruple to translate; though, since the Cenci in our language has been sung, they need not startle:—"Le mensonge n'est un vice que quand il fait du mal; c'est une très-grande vertu, quand il fait du bien. Soyez donc plus vertueux que jamais. Il faut mentir comme un diable; non pas timidement, non pas pour un temps, mais hardiment et toujours. Mentez, mes amis, mentez; je vous le rendrai dans l'occasion." "Is it not of these men," cried Dupanloup, "that Fénélon would have used the words, Ce n'est pas une secte de philosophes, mais de menteurs?"

Homer says of Autolycus, maternal uncle of Ulysses, that he surpassed all men in the art of deception. Methinks he would have many candidates to compete with him at present, so many are there, like the sophist in Plato, who tried to escape by the double meaning of the word *κρείττων*, which he used first to signify the strongest, and then the best man[†]. But it is in nourishing and expanding the spirit of detraction and calumny that this odious consequence of infidelity seems most apparent. The poet speaks for it when saying,—

> "Upon my tongue continual slanders ride,
> The which in every language I pronounce,
> Stuffing the ears of men with false reports."

To find a parallel to the spirit and language, and often, we may add, to the silence of infidelity in this respect, we must go back to the old pages of the history of Reynard the Fox, where all the innocent beasts are represented dumb, and amazed to behold the stout denials and plausible statements of their deceitful enemy, which cause them at length to say, "This devilish murderer hath such art in his falsehood, that no truth can look with better countenance; therefore it is better we depart than try combat with him:" and so, being scared, they privately departed. Infidels cannot disown the picture thus drawn to represent them, since they cannot but plead guilty to the charge of using odious

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[*] Chat. Mém. vi.

[†] De Repub. i.

insinuations in order to render the holy and the just objects of popular suspicion, acting thus like the suitors, who said of Telemachus,—

> *'Hὲ καὶ εἰς 'Εφύρην ἐθέλει πίειραν ἄρουραν*
> *'Ελθεῖν, ὄφρ' ἔνθεν θυμοφθόρα φάρμακ' ἐνείκῃ,*
> *'Εν δὲ βάλῃ κρητῆρι, καὶ ἡμέας πάντας ὀλέσσῃ**.

Infidelity wholly triumphant follows, in this respect, most closely the old manners of Protestantism, its ancient ally, an observation of which drew even from one of its victims the reply that indicates so perfect a knowledge of its character :—" As for those terrible names which ye have got together, we know your manner of fight, when the quiver of your arguments, which is ever thin and weakly stored, after the first brunt is quite empty, your course is to betake ye to your other quiver of slander, wherein lies your best archery. And whom you could not move by sophistical arguing them you think to confute by scandalous misnaming ;" as in effect a short slander will ofttimes reach further than a long apology. The concerted voice of infidels is not a power to be disdained by any one who seeks to pass his life in peace. There are terrible instances of the extent to which it can reach, passing through the public mind to the judgment even of those who sit in the tribunals, who, in consequence, have been known to send innocent and holy men as convicted criminals to the galleys. Job, answering those who represented later sophists, said, " Audivi frequenter talia ;" " for the elect," says St. Odo, commenting the words, " are often taunted with the crimes of others as if they were their own †." The followers of truth in every age experience the justice of this observation. In fine, the subtle poison of infidelity, once imbibed, imparts to those who partake of it repulsive manners, rendering them likewise, secretly at least, wretched ; and thereby are formed other signals to warn men from the path they follow. Plato speaks of countenances, which, having no other beauty but a certain flower of youth, soon lose it and grow hideous ‡. On this road of the dry tree we find no saplings, and every plant seems to spring cankered from the lap of earth. Such countenances we meet as those which rendered the gloomy shades of penal woe more horrible to the bard, when he saw him

> ——— " whose visage spake
> Fell rancour, malice deep, wherein he died ;"

and, if we listen to the confessions that a bitter conscience will at times oblige some others to pour forth, no one will envy the results of their philosophy.

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* ii. 328. † Mor. in Job, xiii. ‡ De Repub. x.

The second opening of this class to a recognition of the truth of Catholicity, from the sad road on which we are travelling, is effected by a consideration of the social consequences of infidelity.

> " What bonds of black ideas spread their wings,
> The peaceful regions of content invade,
> With deadly poison taint the crystal springs,
> With noisome vapour blast the verdant shade ! "

The Roman poet threatens his friend, as a punishment, that he will send him the worst books he can find in the shops.

> ——— " ad librariorum
> Curram scrinia ; Cæsios, Agninios,
> Suffenum, omnia colligam venena,
> Ac te his suppliciis remunerabor."

The malice of such a thought would now be devilish. O you that will be less fearful than discreet,

> " That love the fundamental part of state,
> More than you doubt the change of 't, that prefer
> The multitudinous tongue to wisdom in the few,
> Defend the people ; let them not lick
> The sweet which is their poison ; your dishonour
> Mangles true judgment, and bereaves the state
> Of that integrity which should become it ;
> Not having the power to do the good it would,
> For the ill which doth control it."

Already one may imagine the effect which such views must produce upon general manners, which after all are only made up of the manners of individuals. If hitherto you have resisted the attraction which draws men to the central truth,—

> " Te saltem moveant naturæ damna, pudoris
> Exilium, jactura boni, dejectio morum,
> Error honestatis, fidei proscriptio, legum
> Contemptus *."

Infidelity invites its adepts to put off, as garments overworn, forbearance and respect, remorse and fear, and all the fit restraints of daily life which have been borne from childhood. The religious and social heresies allied with it have made such progress that those before confused seem worse confounded ; authority and power, and hoary hair, are grown crimes capital. " All respect is dead," says a great statesman ; " the authority of experience and of age, birth or genius, talent or virtue—all is denied."

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* Alani Encyclop. lib. vi. 6.

Obedience fails in children, truth in parents, honesty in bound servants, who deem large-handed robbers their grave masters. It was the old adage, oftener perhaps in substance verified than is generally supposed, that disobedience to the natural law brought its own punishment—

> " Impia quid meruit soboles onerosa parenti !
> Ipsis ut rapidi populent cava lumina corvi."

The curse of Timon falls not alone on Athens now. There are houses that have somewhat to chronicle in this respect from experience; houses in which every infidel author of France was lauded in prosperous days, and in which men have lived to see the bitter tears of parental agony caused first by the ingratitude of children, and afterwards by the appalling calamity that overtook those children, born for the shameful ruin of a family, and not for the transmission of its hereditary honours. What tragedies are witnessed now in the palaces of the great as in the garrets and cellars of the poor, where the Voltairean philosophy has been received with open arms! It is a father who betrays his son; it is a child who shoots his mother; it is a husband who murders his wife. Lately, a son who was fast bringing down his father's white hairs with sorrow to the grave, was expostulated with by a man of law, who loved the family. " My dear sir," replied the young heir, taking out his snuff-box and offering him a pinch, " it is that you view this conduct in one light, and I in quite another." The rejection of the Gospel is seen to involve that also of the natural law; and the dissolution begins with the domestic bond. The whole theory of the Christian civilization becomes a thing in the general opinion defective and obsolete. The worst men who belonged to that state of things, as a great author says, " belonged more or less to the ancient human race. There was a scale of proportions by which they could be measured; but we are arrived at generations which belong no more to the past: studied in the microscope, they do not seem capable of life; and yet they combine with elements in which they move; they can breathe in an air that seems to exclude respiration. Posterity perhaps will discover formulas for calculating the laws of existence of these creatures; but at present we have no means of appreciating them."

Meanwhile we can observe how every form of error is represented as the necessary result of a progress by the human mind, and consequently preferable to the truth which condemns it. One guide invites some vague and visionary future; another would bring back what Catholicism had driven out. " I have always much regretted, for my part," says a popular writer of the latter class, " that the Moors did not continue masters of Spain, which certainly only lost by their expulsion." Gibbon laments the groves

of Daphne near Antioch, and complains how fanaticism had destroyed its ornaments, after driving out the nymphs of that elegant retreat. Voltaire, in censuring every other part of Solomon's conduct, bestows praise on his luxury, and advises all kings to imitate him who "joined to his talents the happy art of enjoying himself." "O sages of the eighteenth century," says a monitor, "who style yourselves the friends of kings, is it thus that you instruct them*?" It is for the people now that they reserve these lessons, having slain, dethroned, or driven out their friends. The complaint of Alanus becomes more than ever seasonable,—

"Heu, quò naturæ secessit gratia! morum
Forma, pudicitiæ norma, pudoris amor†!"

Strange natures coalescing thus constitute a brotherhood of ill, and savage sympathy becomes the bond.

———— "Those slaves impure
Each one the other thus from ill to ill did lure;
So these triumph, and like blight or blast
A shade of selfish care o'er human looks is cast."

No more the gay and merry people that they once were known to be, soured by mistrust and desperate by the calamities that crimes and selfishness entail, the nations that hope to dethrone God present one of those general and fearful pictures of human vanity which the holy Fathers employ for the instruction of mankind, saying, with St. Augustin, "Quanta autem est vanitas, quanta insania, quantumque mendacium, hominem mortalem ærumnosam vitam mortali spiritu et carne ducentem tot peccatis oneratum, tot tentationibus subditum, tot corruptionibus obnoxium, pœnisque justissimis destinatum in se ipso fidere, ut beatus sit, quando ne illud quidem, quod habet in naturæ suæ dignitate præcipuum, id est mentem atque rationem potest vindicare ab erroribus nisi Deus adsit, lux mentium‡." "The languages of the devil," says d'Avila, "corresponding with his malicious intentions, are consequently innumerable." Many contradictory voices resound here through the forest to perplex the wanderer whom the false fire of these exhalations lure; so indeed all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follow them. Clamours of hell are measures to their pomp. Those who are most read and most admired can truly say of themselves to the people whom they form after their own likeness,—

"We are the ministers of pain, and fear,
And disappointment, and mistrust, and hate,
And clinging crime."

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[*] Lettres de quelques Juifs. [†] De Planctu Naturæ. [‡] Ep. 52.

The propagation of hatred and division through society is the inevitable consequence of infidelity; and Cicero, in his speech against Verres, seems to point out the cause, though, in Christian ages, it is the converse of what he observes that can be seen: for "an tu majores ullas inimicitias putas esse," he asks, "quàm contrarias hominum sententias ac dissimilitudines studiorum et voluntatum? He who thinks that faith ought to be most holy in life, can he not be an enemy to him who betrays every one? Pudorem et pudicitiam qui colit, potest animo æquo istius quotidiana adulteria, meretriciam disciplinam, domesticum lenocinium videre? Qui religionem retinere vult, ei, qui fana spoliarit omnia, qui ex thesaurum orbitis prædari sit ausus, inimicus non esse qui potest? Qui jure æquo omnes putet esse oportere, is tibi non infestissimus sit, quum cogitet varietatem libidinemque decretorum tuorum*?" Hatred becomes the social as well as the individual characteristic. But what kind of hatred? Not such as the orator supposes cherished by the victim; but hatred manifested by the oppressor. Not impotent dislike; but hatred invested with power. For God will have it so in his secret doom, that they only should govern a society which rejects faith, who, in their passages of life, seem to have been marked for the hot vengeance and the rod of Heaven, to punish our mis-treadings. This, you will say, is a melancholy view to take of the world around us. Truly, there is no pleasure in having it forced upon observation: but to what other conclusion can any one come, who does not obstinately shut his eyes to facts? Goethe was not under the influence of Catholic impressions, nor was he a fond and exclusive lover of the past; and yet his words are stronger than any thing that has been uttered here: "The present times," he says, "are worse even than one thinks."

In fine, the transition now is easy to the third opening, which is formed by the political consequences of infidelity, on which we can only throw a brief and passing glance. Neglecting to notice its action when in an incipient or compressed state, as existing under a disguise in England in the political party which, excepting by the virulence and malevolence ascribed to it by Johnson, can only reveal itself by sympathising with its foreign allies, we shall proceed at once to witness its results when exercised on the vast field of continental politics, where, showing itself with less hypocrisy, the consequences are more visible and portentous. One beautiful summer day, a short while before the late revolutions, the stranger was serving as a guide to two venerable priests and an illustrious friend, long versed in diplomatic life, through the forest of St. Germain. He was looking at the

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* In Ver. II. lib. ii.

stately trees and the beauteous flowers, and inviting his companions at every step to admire their grandeur and their loveliness.

> " There are orchises here, with a bee on the tips ;
>   And the fern waves her fan to the western wind's sigh ;
> And mixed with the moss, red as infancy's lips,
>   And ready to gather, the strawberries lie *."

The visitors, for they had only just arrived from the capital, were holding sad foreboding talk on the probability of fresh political disturbances and new woes prepared for their unhappy country. "But look," said the stranger, deeming their anticipations at least exaggerated, "look at the heights beyond this forest. See the wooded uplands of Marly, and the vast chesnut-trees on Montaigu." Insensible to the invitation, they gazed mournfully at those solemn groves. He wondered at their obduracy ; but, lo! in a few months the horrors of revolution again burst, not only upon that devoted land, but upon nearly the whole of Europe. The woods have experience that might represent the political consequences of infidelity ; for, in the state, that influence produces the effect of fire in the wilderness ; it is sicut ignis qui comburit silvam ; et sicut flamma comburens montes. Of all accidents which endanger forests, the most frequent and terrible is fire, against which there are but weak obstacles. A French ordonnance of 1669 forbids all persons from kindling a fire at any season in forests, or heaths, under pain of corporal punishment or fine. The ash, say foresters, should never be near villages ; for in conflagrations this tree easily catches fire, and communicates it. In Sweden, we read that the whole horizon often glares with a lurid redness, owing to the conflagration of entire forests in consequence of the large fires left burning incautiously ; and then bears, wolves, and foxes, drawn from their retreats, make terrible depredations among the cattle. The flames leap from tree to tree, and, rushing up to their tops, throw out immense volumes of fire from the thick clouds of smoke that hang over the burning mass, while the falling trees come down with the most tremendous crash. In 1825, upwards of a hundred miles of forest, on the north side of the Miramachi river, in America, became a scene of conflagration.

But the fire of the wood, in one respect, does not accurately represent the calamity of the political conflagrations caused by the unbelievers ; for there, after a fire has raged, the force of vegetation is found to be increased. The birch then spring up as if by magic. Saplings of only two years will have two metres

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* Cayley Shadwell.

and a half in height, as was witnessed in the forest of Orleans after the dreadful fire which ravaged it during the first revolution. Though, on the other hand, if we look closer for analogies, we shall find a point of resemblance even in the remote consequences; for, when forests have been burned, a strong noxious plant, called the fire-weed, instantly springs up, which, if suffered to spread, would exhaust all the fertility of the ground.

Infidelity fires, in the beginning, the sacred trees of the political forest. Thence it spreads to involve the others, which form the common body of the state, in general ruin; and no more burning, dark, lamentable, and hideous stream ever issued from the waves of hell.

Infidelity, in the first place, undermines the whole political existence of nations by forming a race of men who breathe destruction to that foundation of religion on which rests the social edifice of states. It is the remark of Walpole, that "in policy, as in architecture, the ruin is greatest when it begins with the foundation." Hume maintained, that "no objects are in themselves desirable or odious, valuable or despicable; but that objects acquire these qualities from the particular character and constitution of the mind which surveys them." These philosophers deem religion, and all its institutions and monuments, despicable. The conclusion is drawn in the work of havoc. Protestantism left standing in some places where its energumens were restrained, some churches, some monasteries, some crosses. Infidelity, its devoted ally, as soon as the hour for its action comes, proceeds to add them to the general ruin, and leave nothing visible standing that can uphold the popular faith. "Its general product is a race of half-learned wits, a thousand times worse than ignorance, always ready," as De Maistre says, "to overthrow what they despise; that is, every thing*." Pausanias tells us, that the Greeks neglected to rebuild the different temples which were burnt by the Persians in their invasion, in order that the half-burnt ruins might remain an eternal monument of the fury of these barbarians†. It is indifference and connivance, not a just indignation, which can account for the ruins that are now left standing in every part of Europe, though they attest the atrocious spirit of the new barbarians, who, under the banners of the Voltairean philosophy, invaded countries that were once the happiest and most beautiful regions of the earth. "The crafty and deceitful race of the impious," says the old poet, "are like ravens that respect no altar,"—

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* Lettre sur l'Éducat. en Russie.

† Lib. x.

Δολόφρονες δὲ καὶ δολιομήτιδες
δυσάγνοις φρεσὶν, κόρακες ὥστε, βω-
μῶν ἀλέγοντες οὐδέν[*].

Such are the sophists of our age, to whom the Roman words are applicable: "Qui parietibus, qui tectis, qui columnis ac postibus horrificum quoddam et nefarium omni imbutum odio bellum intulistis[†]." Milton sings the arch destroyer, who had even exhausted

——— "all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying; other joy
To whom was lost."

But the hatred of Catholicism adds a zest to the toil of these demolishers which the earlier poet could not conceive existing in the fiend. These men have a motive for repeating words that were innocent from Pagan lips, but which, on their tongue, express a most deep malice against the King of kings. "Quid enim optari potest," might the Voltairean prefect say, in citing Cicero, "quod ego mallem, quam me in consulatu meo crucem de campo sustulisse[‡]?" And then, when other sacrilegious acts can be committed, who more indefatigable than these men? who more unnatural? Are you mankind? Note but their ingratitude. How deadly must be the poison that can convert whole civilized nations into ruthless savages! John, king of Bohemia, slain fighting for France at Crécy, was buried in the church of the Dominicans, at Montargis. "O that my pen could expiate the ingratitude of France!" cries Chateaubriand, "when we astonished heaven by our sacrileges, and cast out of his tomb a prince who had been slain for us in the days of our ancient calamities!" Infidelity makes even rulers, now in the seat of empire, act like Verres in a distant province, the description of whose spoliations in Sicily cannot be read without their deeds at Madrid, Turin, and Genoa being recalled. When Cicero addresses him with the words, "Tu, quæ ex fanis religiosissimis per scelus et latrocinium abstulisti, ea nos videre, nisi in tuis amicorumque tuorum tectis, non possumus;" and again, when he says, "Vidi collucere omnia furtis tuis, præda provinciarum spoliis sociorum atque amicorum[§]," it is difficult to prevent one's thoughts from turning to Italy, and Spain, and to the infidel robbers of churches, who, as constitutional monarchs and amateurs, have so lately ravaged them. England, and France herself, may now indignantly exclaim, alluding to them,—

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[*] Eumen. 749.

[†] Pro Domo Sua.

[‡] Pro C. Rabirio.

[§] In Ver. Act. II. lib. i.

——— "One that feeds
On objects, arts, and imitations,
Which, out of use, and staled by other men,
Begin his fashion : do not talk of him !"

Truly, the resemblance is striking. The treasures of monasteries in the shops of Jews, and in the palaces of the rich, laid up with their new side-board plate, will easily recall the memory of that plunderer who "left nothing in the most religious temple but the vestiges of violated religion and the name of worthies ;" since henceforth the monuments of Catholic kings, and the treasures of most ancient churches, will be counted in the inventory of some national museum, or of some mill owner's domestic furniture. "And what persons," exclaims the indignant orator, "were combined with Verres in spoiling temples?" Who are the associates, we too may ask, of the new Verres? They are men so sensual, that each is worthy of hearing his concluding words, uttered in reference to himself: "At minime mirum, quæ sacra per summam castimoniam virorum ac mulierum fiant, eadem per istius stuprum ac flagitium esse violata*." And yet there were examples in the deplorable times described by the old Roman that infidelity, in our days, would never imitate ; for certain ivory tusks, forcibly taken from the temple of Juno, in Malta, being brought as a present to King Masinissa, in Africa, the king, at first delighted with the gift, afterwards hearing whence they came, immediately sent some men in a quinquereme to restore them to the temple ; so that these words, in Punic characters, were inscribed on them : "Regem Masinissam imprudentem accepisse ; re cognita, reponendos restituendosque curasse†." Apologies for such measures are urged now as then. They are represented as highly beneficial : "Sed, ut opinor," continues Cicero, "solet hæc, quæ rapuit et furatus est, nonnumquam dicere, se emisse ; since through Achaia, Asia, and Pamphylia, at the public expense, and under the name of a legation, a dealer in pictures and statues was sent." All the acts of modern impiety can thus be traced back to these ancient times. But, however willing some may be to acquiesce in what passes, these cannot satisfy all men who look on. Impiety, therefore, as evinced by such acts, must necessarily be taken into consideration when one contemplates the fatal political consequences of the infidel philosophy, and the signals which they constitute. "May thy hatred of the impious still increase!" says Minerva, praying for her beloved land‡ ; so clear was considered the connexion between reverence for religion and the happiness of states. Plato seems to refer to the class of sins almost theoretical such acts as cha-

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* II. lib. iv. † Id. ‡ Eumen. 910.

racterize the civilization resulting from the philosophy that now pervades Europe. "We have no reason," he says, "to suppose, though we make laws against the pillage of temples, *ἱερῶν πέρι συλήσεως*, that any citizen, rightly educated, will ever dare to do such a thing, or contract such a disease; but it can happen that their slaves or strangers, and the slaves of strangers, may attempt to do so. The prelude to our law against the pillage of temples may be thus: the man tempted to rob sacred things should be pressed during the day, and should be awakened at night, to hear such words as these: *Ὦ θαυμάσιε*, 'The desire which impels you to pillage temples is not a sin natural to man, *οὐκ ἀνθρώπινον κακόν·* it is a certain spirit of dizziness, contracted by ancient unexpiated faults cleaving to you, which you must endeavour to escape from with all your strength. The mode of escape is this: when such thoughts come into your mind, have recourse to divine ceremonies; repair as a suppliant to the divine temples; seek the company of the men most esteemed for virtue; hear them speak, and try to speak yourself with them, how necessary it is for man to honour always *τὰ καλὰ καὶ τὰ δίκαια*, and fly from all intercourse with the wicked! Perchance then your disease will be alleviated—*εἰ δὲ μή, καλλίω θάνατον σκεψάμενος, ἀπαλλάττου τοῦ Βίου.* Quit life*.'"

These are thoughts and sayings that, with the exception of the conclusion separated from the rest, men of "the times" cannot comprehend. But, however such considerations may be slighted as the superstitious fancy of dark ages, the connexion between the destroyers of temples and the destroyers of states becomes evident by acts of a more formal political order, which render scepticism on this head no longer possible. "This man," says Plato, "is in the state what a drone is in the hive of bees; that is, a nuisance, a scourge: but there is this difference,—that God has created without a sting the winged drone; whereas among these two-legged drones there are some who have very dangerous stings. Thus in a state are formed a body of men provided with stings†," of each of whom we may say, in the words of Livy, referring to Asdrubal at the taking of Carthage, "Talibus nimirum opus est, cum populos diu felices ad interitum vocat humana omnium rerum instabilitas‡." "From his youth upwards," says Goethe, "Voltaire's wishes and endeavours had been directed to gain a connexion with the heads of the earth, that he himself might, by a profitable connexion with them, be one of the heads of the earth also."

"Men thought it was a mind that might remain
A poison where it was, not poison any further.

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* Lib. ix. De Legibus.

† De Repub. viii.

‡ Lib. li.

O skill'd, but most unwise patricians! why,
You grave but reckless senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here to choose an officer
That, with his peremptory shall, being but
The horn and noise o' the monsters, wants not spirit
To say, he'll turn your current in a ditch,
And make your channel his?"

We must not forget, that infidelity is not content with consuming internally its victims; it thinks it has a mission to rule and govern the world in both the material and the spiritual order. Venomous Atheism were no treasure to be kept within kingdoms, or within men's private breasts, if they would but see the consequences; for mark here, that while there is a kind of justice observed among them that do evil, these men at the head of affairs in some countries, as in Switzerland and Piedmont, appear to love injustice in the very order of their malice. "They seek to render their government," as the old Roman says, "rich in the misfortunes of others, affluent in calamities for the just, immortal in funereal woes." Yet, under what a shower, under what a tempest of words, do not the impious heads of such government desire their injustice to be buried? Like the sacro-sanct power of the tribunes, this spirit pretends to be the sole representative of governmental virtue, while its pride alone would regard true freedom as dangerous and hateful. For subjects, indeed, it substitutes citizens—a hollow word, as if a dead man spake it. It assumes, too, the office, not alone of tyrant, but of father. "Sed hoc est," as Cicero might say, "non uni propinquo, sed omnibus familiis bellum nefarium indicere." Well does Job speak of the proud tyranny of the impious; for, as St. Odo observes, "all pride exercises a tyranny; so that, when external power is wanting, it plays the tyrant with itself under the rule of internal iniquity*." With whatever transports their accession to power may be hailed by a deluded multitude, after some time, were the liberality of these men recited, the birds that should fly over at the moment would be in no danger of falling to the ground through astonishment and fear at the joyful acclamations of the approving crowd of hearers; as when the herald announced freedom to the conquered Grecian states from the Roman Senate and people, when the hearers were filled with such immense and unexpected joy. Paris demolished the Bastile in 1789, in which were seven prisoners, of whom four were coiners, and one a madman. Paris remained calm in 1793, when were held under bolts 200,000 prisoners. Infidelity wages a war of extirpation against the civilization which was produced by the Gospel. It

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* Mor. in Job, lib. xii.

forms men who now, literally for barbarism, speak more than for that angel knowledge. "The cynicism of morals," as Chateaubriand says, "brings back into society, by annihilating the moral sense, a kind of barbarians. These barbarians of civilization, qualified for the work of destruction, like the Goths, have not the power, like them, of founding any thing. The one were the enormous children of a virginal nature; but the others are the monstrous abortions of a nature depraved[*]." Infidelity withers the political as well as the moral state of men. It creates jealousies, cruel fears, hatreds, and oppression. As the same French author observes, "the sovereign people being every where, when it becomes a tyrant, the tyrant is every where. It is the universal presence of a universal Tiberius[†]." Then, indeed, may follow a utility and a direction that it never dreamed of; for the flight of saints has often proved useful to nations—utilis populis fuga sanctorum; but the turpitude of its counsels continues significative as before.

In regular states, while a legitimate government exists, infidelity prowls in secret, every where seeking to prey upon the vitals of the community. "May Heaven grant a quiet night both to us and to the wild beasts of the forest!" used the good-natured Franciscan friar to say to Humboldt, when accompanying him to the Brazilian frontier. Infidelity turns a nation into such a forest, and renders a similar prayer familiar to the just. Infidelity produces secret associations, when some six or seven meet by night, who do hide their faces even from darkness; then is there one deadly object coolly and steadily kept in view, though the sophists, who seek new confederates in secret league to expel Catholicity from life, may be said to combine in mad endeavour that the sun should cease to shine upon the world. Oh, that we could sound the trumpet of rebellion through all creation, and lead air, and earth, and sea into battle-array against this generation! Such is the prayer of these secret societies, while their cautions are like those of Antinous, addressed to the other suitors, when they conspired against Telemachus:—

Δαιμόνιοι μύθους μὲν ὑπερφιάλους ἀλέασθε
Πάντας ὁμῶς, μήπως τις ἐπαγγείλῃσι καὶ εἴσω.
'Αλλ' ἄγε σιγῇ τοῖον ἀναστάντες τελέωμεν
Μῦθον, ὃ δὴ καὶ πᾶσιν ἐνὶ φρεσὶν ἤραρεν ἡμῖν[‡].

They say to their initiated,—

——— "Good now, play one scene
Of excellent dissembling; and let it look
Like perfect honour."

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[*] Mém.

[†] Chateaub. Mém.

[‡] iv. 774.

Yet, if it be our task to pourtray men as they are, we must, at the same time, include those qualities of which even the most vicious are not wholly destitute. "If I would warn mankind," says Schiller, "against the tiger, I must not omit to describe his glossy, beautifully marked skin, lest, owing to this omission, the ferocious animal should not be recognised till too late." So we must admit that resolution, perseverance, and an inviolable bond belong to the character of these confederations. "We know what honour is," says the Moor assassin to Fiesco, "and our honour is more to be relied on than that of your men of character. They break their oaths made in the name of God. We keep ours pledged to his enemy." Then to diet weak minds, sick of happiness, literature, poetry, philosophy, journalism, and legislation become the medium of the steady energetic action. In vain are some wise counsellors found still to ask,—

"Wherefore have you commanded
These most poisonous compounds?"

or, as Plato would now advise, to say, "Such discourses are dangerous; let us beware how we say so, with Voltaire, or with Rousseau, or with Sue. Let us banish from our state these sorts of fictions, for fear lest they engender in our youth an unhappy facility to commit the greatest crimes; let us banish them*." "The brethren" take steps in consequence to prevent such an issue. The constitution, the rights of men, the voice of the people are invoked; the government perhaps deliberates. For certain crimes Plato proposes this punishment: "He who is guilty of them," he says, "shall pitch a tent on the sea-shore, so that he can wait in it with his feet in the sea till there be a ship ready to take him away†." Infidelity takes care that there shall be no such measures provided against the dangers which it prepares for states. Are they proposed? The cry is instantly, "All hell shall stir for this." Then is there—

"A voiceless thought of evil, which does spread
With the quick glance of eyes, like withering lightning shed."

The moment is come; all circumstances conspire. A general shout invites to open war. Hypocrisy is no longer needed; the cry is,—

"March on, join bravely, let us to 't pell-mell,
If not to heaven, then hand in hand to hell."

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* De Repub. iii.

† De Legibus, ix.

"Then, like the forests of some pathless mountain,
Which from remotest glens two warring winds
Involve in fire, which not the loosen'd fountain
Of broadest floods might quench, shall all the kinds
Of evil catch from these uniting minds
The spark which must consume them."

Catholicism is union, the secret of uniting: infidelity, natural ally of heresy, is dissection, analysis, the old Egyptian art, the art of the black land, for the Egyptians called their country χημία, from the black earth. It is the "chemie" spoken of in old writings, transferred from its application to gold and silver to intellectual combinations, a moral, social, and political chemistry, which, even in its ordinary sense, is called by the Germans, "the art of separating." So "the rich and beautiful unity of the Catholic life has disappeared," says a French author, "by degrees, and we are now left to admire the results of this state of things, and observe what have become of the state separated from the Church, science separated from faith, politics separated from charity, rights separated from duties, and kings and people separated from God*." Behold the wisdom that is in repute on the banks, not of the Eurotas†, in times of heathen darkness, as one indignantly complains in the Andromache, but in the nineteenth century, on the Seine, thence, we are told, to spread by the Rhine, the Danube, the Tiber, and the Thames, over the whole world. "European society," says a Spanish statesman of the present day, casting a melancholy discouraged look around him, "dies poisoned. It dies, because, as man does not live by bread alone, but by every word which comes out of the mouth of God, so society does not perish only by the sword, but by every anti-Catholic word which issues from the mouth of the philosophers, who pretend to know God without the assistance of God—man, without the assistance of Him who formed him—and society, without the succour of Him, on whose secret government it is for ever depending‡."

There remains a last signal, furnished by the men themselves, whose incredulity has hitherto been considered, in the abstract, in its causes and in its effects. Oh, here is a fell spot! "Here we are to meet," the stranger feels impelled to say, "my old enemies in bodily shape—the foes of my youth, the foes of my nature, whom I once fought against in days when I was in the vein of chivalry, whom I find here confronted with me as the insidious destroyers of all that I love and venerate; the same

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* Sainte-Foi.

† 437.

‡ Don Juan Donoso Cortez.

still whom I recognised for my personal enemies from my schoolboy age,—I was going to say, from my cradle."

> "Huge routs of people do about them band,
> Shouting for joy; and still before their way
> A foggy mist has covered all the land;
> And, underneath their feet, all scatter'd lay
> Dead skulls and bones of men whose life had gone astray."

Nature has instincts imparted for its preservation. "From the time when I was a boy," says Gorgo with Theocritus, "I have always felt horror at the thought of meeting a cold snake." This pass, then, of the road would not suit him; for here, methinks, already sounds a voice like that of Sordello to Dante,—

> ——"Lo, there, our enemy!
> And with his hand pointed that way to look,
> Down the little vale a serpent lay,
> Such, haply, as gave Eve the bitter food.
> Between the grass and flowers the evil snake
> Came on, reverting oft his lifted head [*]."

"The serpent," says Pliny, "is poisonous; it seeks darkness, concealment, silence; nor does it know of any other reward of its detested spirit than to hate all things; nec ullum aliud abominati spiritus præmium novere, quam odisse omnia[†]." Thus striking is the analogy, or, if we may be allowed to speak so, the family likeness between the natural spotted snake with double tongue and the human serpent; and yet there is another point of resemblance—for, as it is in Catholic countries that venemous men show themselves most spiteful, so—

> "It is the bright day that brings forth the adder,
> And that craves wary walking."

In the forest of Fontainbleau men dare not stray without having their feet and legs well guarded from the reptiles that abound; and on the woody heights of Fontenaix-aux-roses, at every step you hear the rustling of the wily snake that glides into the stony ground. If the symbol causes such fear, what dread ought not the thing itself, which it represents, then to inspire! when in some club, or other huge assembly,—

> "The light of such a joy, as makes the stare
> Of hungry snakes like living emeralds glow,
> Shines in a hundred human eyes?"

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[*] Purg. 8.

[†] N. H. lib. xviii. 1.

"Furor illis secundum similitudinem serpentis, sicut aspidis surdæ, et obturantis aures suas *." I wonder not, when some are heard exclaiming,—

——— "See the beast from whom I fled :
O save me from her, thou illustrious sage !
For every vein and pulse throughout my frame
She hath made tremble †."

Or when others cry, "Oh, let us quit this ravine! for,—

"'Whilst I behold such execrable shapes,
Methinks I grow like what I contemplate.'"

And, in point of fact, the kind sage whom no event surprises, even when speaking to encourage them, as he who tried to comfort Dante, when he heard the hoarse voice invoking Satan, uses words that prove what great need there is of caution here, for he will say,—

"Yet have they many baits and guileful spells
To inveigle and invite th' unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way."

There sits the infidel, seeking to capture all who approach his nets, inviting them to liberty and philanthropy, and lamenting that Christians should be so unkind ;—

"But like a foul mis-shapen stigmatic,
Mark'd by the destinies to be avoided,
As venom toads, or lizard's dreadful stings,
Have not to do with him, beware of him ;
Sin, death, and hell have set their marks on him,
And all their ministers attend him."

Dantæan cautions never more were needed.

—— "Turn thyself round, and keep
Thy countenance hid ; for if the Gorgon dire
Be shown, and thou should'st view it, thy return
Upwards would be for ever lost ‡."

The Gorgons, transforming into stones all those who once beheld them, might represent the obdurate men, who change into flint the hearts of those who join their company.

Nevertheless, nothing forbids from proceeding those who are provided with the antidotes supplied by faith. Catholics are not left defenceless and without the knowledge of remedies appropriate to the danger. Their guides do not partake of that

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* Ps. lvii.

† Inf. 1.

‡ Inf. 9.

malignity, which Pliny says "should be noted in the dog; for, when stung by a serpent, it seeks some herb that it knows can cure the venom, but it does not gather it if any man be looking on*." They impart their wisdom freely; and their remedies for the intellectual poison are more efficacious than those recommended by the old naturalist for the material danger, when he tells us that "the leaves of the cyprus bruised, and those of the rhododendron, are to be used for the bite of serpents†;" and that "the leaves of the larch, and the bark of the platanus, cure the sting of scorpions‡." Those who have imbibed the spiritual remedy will hasten to make it known, regardless of their own sufferings, nobly endured for the general benefit; they resemble that physician, who offers his arm within the cage of an irritated asp, in order that the efficacy of his specific may be proclaimed to the human race. They will then, like Sintram in the forest, ride on calm and steadfast, though Death is at their side, and diabolic countenances glare on them from every tree. When he took this way, we read that "the snow had slipped down from the smooth rocks; and by the light of the rising moon could be seen various strange twisted shapes on their sides, some looking like snakes, and some like human faces; but they were only formed by the veins in the rocks, and the half-bare roots of trees, which had planted themselves in that desert place with capricious firmness. On the ground, in the middle of the road, were lying dead men's bones, and hideous lizards were crawling about, and, in defiance of the wintry season, poisonous mushrooms were growing up all around." Yet how serene and unconcerned does he ride along! It is that these men are proof against all hellish poisonous looks and sounds; it is that they have cast off the secret misgivings of those who know not what is truth, that they feel the power of faith,—

"And even here now, through the paths of men,
Will pass, as the charmed bird that haunts the serpent's den."

As one who had four years' experience of them says, "The scoffings of the infidel, the objections of the Protestant, the sneers of the man of the world, pass over their heads as clouds over a mountain peak, and leave them calm and undisturbed, with their feet resting upon the Rock of Ages."

If it should suit our fancy to introduce a dismal reality with the agreeable language of a romantic fiction, I know not what should prevent us from adopting it; and, besides, the longer we travel amidst emblems, before meeting with that reality which

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* N. H. xxv. 51.

† Id. xxiv. 10.

‡ Id. xx. 29.

thus forecasts its gloom, the less time will remain for consorting with it. "The early light lay rich upon the verdant turf," says then the knight to Undine; "it shone so rosy on the slender boles of the trees, and there was so merry a whispering among the leaves, that in my heart I could not but laugh at the people who feared meeting any thing to terrify them in a wood so delightful; but soon a wizard-like dwarf stood at my side, diminutive and ugly beyond conception; his countenance was yellow; his mouth was slit almost from ear to ear, and he showed his teeth with a grinning smile, while he overwhelmed me with bows and scrapes innumerable."

The pride which assumes the form of infidelity will at times endeavour thus to look agreeable, and invite all who pass to admire the beauty of its thought; but the delusion does not last. A holy word by chance uttered, a cross seen in the distance, the sound of a choir heard within a church by the way-side, can dissolve the spell, as at the touch of Ithuriel's spear, discovered and surprised, started up in his own shape the fiend. At one time the fell purpose can only be inferred from hints and gestures, as when Satan, still in heaven, disclosing his projects of revolt, says to a companion, "More in this place to utter is not safe." At another, there is an open avowal, as in the lines—

"To hell allegiance! Vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation!"

In one place it is only journalists and novelists—a kind of new barbarians, "qui illiteratissimis literis vacant," as Sidonius Apollinaris says[*]; writers whose ignorance and malice exemplify the saying of the monk Evagrius, "quocumque ingressa fuerit malitia, ibi et ignorantia; corda autem justorum implebuntur scientia[†]." If it be not ignorance that characterizes the despotism which infidels assume and exercise, I know not where such want is to be found, It is often even avowed; for, as Frederick Schlegel says, "the spirit most predominant among the writers of our day is that which holds ignorance and neglect of study for the most decisive proof of genius." The chorus of voices that follow him who spoke of "the inhuman and uncultured race" would be silenced, if the erudition brought to bear against him, in the "letters of some Jews," had been received: but all authors of this class are continually engaged in trying, as Johnson observes, what error can perform in opposition to learning, on questions which learning only can decide. It is the observation of Rousseau, that their apparent scepticism is an hundred times more affirmative and dogmatical than the decided tone of their

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[*] Lib. iv. ep. 3.

[†] Evag. Mon. Sententiæ, ii.

adversaries; that under the haughty pretext of being alone the enlightened, the true, and the honest, they summon men imperiously to submit to their absolute decisions, and pretend to give them, for the true principles of things, unintelligible systems which they have constructed in their imaginations, overthrowing, destroying, trampling under foot, all that men respect, taking from the afflicted the last consolation of their misery, from the powerful and the rich the sole bridle of their passions, tearing from the bottom of hearts the remorse of crime, the hope of virtue, and boasting to be the benefactors of humanity, saying that truth is never hurtful to men, which draws even from this sophist the remarkable words, " I believe so too, and in my mind there cannot be a greater proof that what they teach is not truth." Yet these men betray a fear of Catholics, as serpents dread kindled juniper and the ash, shrinking even from the shadow of the latter tree, so that Pliny says, if a snake be placed in the midst of ash-branches, and surrounded with its leaves, it will fly through fire to escape *; so the adversary of this class will deprecate a meeting with the unassuming but undaunted Catholic;—

" For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade."

But there are yet blacker spirits, who even on earth can be observed to repeat the scene so awfully described by Dante in the lines:—

" When he had spoke, the sinner raised his hands
Pointed in mock'ry, and cried, 'Take them, God!
I level them at thee †.' "

When such is the defiance, it would be great weakness to suppose that men retaining any reverence for God on earth were not included in it. We should soon be undeceived. Do but displease " les frères," and presently in a mass these spirits will play the same part now.

——— " God and their parents they blaspheme,
The human kind, the place, the time, and seed
That did engender them, and give them birth ‡."

And it is not difficult to displease " the brethren," though they may carefully refrain from acknowledging the cause of their hatred. " Duels of opinion," says the Count de Maistre, " resemble duels between individuals. You wonder to see two men anxious to kill each other for a word. It is hardly ever about a word though. It is from a profound hatred, and about some-

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* N. H. lib. vi. † Inf. 25. ‡ Id. 3.

thing of which they do not speak." He cites the instance of the war against the Jesuits, whose adversaries only complained of their not teaching the physical sciences, while the real question was about something of which they took care not to breathe a hint. But let us watch the men whose mutual hatred seems to provide for them the right of entrance among the tribe once seen by Dante—

> " Of these ill spirits both to God displeasing
> And to his foes, these wretches, who ne'er lived,
> Went on in wickedness, and sorely stung
> By wasps and hornets *."

Here at all events, on earth, are they worried and envenomed by each other's sting, though heedless of those who would excite them without profit to serve a less advanced ally; for they despise heresy as much as they hate truth, resembling those who, being once stung by a scorpion, are never afterwards, if you will hear Pliny, vulnerable to the sting of wasps †. A poet asks, " Can aught exult in its deformity?"

> " A wondrous phantom, from the dreams
> Of human error's dense and purblind faith,
> I might evoke to meet his questioning."

But here indeed, as from the first we met might have been concluded, the countenances of those confronted with us will dispense with further trouble; for there is a sinister triumph hideous in its outward expression in

> ———— " all such as speak
> Contemptuously of the Godhead in their hearts ‡."

To trace the infidel through European lands no one needs the instinct of the Indian who discovers the recent footsteps of an enemy on wastes that appear absolutely trackless to less gifted eyes. The enemies of faith can be traced, like him of whom the orator indignantly demanded—" Ecquo in oppido pedem posuit, ubi non plura stuprorum flagitiorumque suorum quam adventûs sui vestigia reliquerit § ?" Nor is he content with leaving these indirect proofs of his hateful wandering, as even one of his own poets, during an interval made lucid by remorse, lamentingly observes, when mounting to a belfry he feels the odious negation inscribed upon the metal—

> " Tout était profané dans la cloche benie,
> Où le Prêtre dit oui, l'autre avait écrit non !

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* Inf. 3.

† Plin. N. H. lib. xxviii. 6.

‡ Inf. 11.

§ In Ver. II. i.

Lache insulte ! affront vil ! vain outrage d'une heure !
Oui ; le blasphème inscrit sur le divin métal,
Dans ce concert sacré perdra son cri fatal ;
Chaque mot qui renie, et chaque mot qui doute
Dans ce torrent d'amour, exprimera sa goutte ;
Et pour faire éclater l'hymne pur et serain
Rien ne sera souillure et tout sera l'airain !
Oh ! c'est un beau triomphe à votre loi sublime !
Seigneur, pour vos regards dont le feu nous ranime,
C'est un spectacle auguste, ineffable et bien doux !
A l'homme comme à l'ange, à l'ange comme à vous,
Qu'une chose en passant par l'impie avilie,
Qui, dès que votre esprit la touche, se délie,
Et sans même songer à son indigne affront,
Chante, l'amour au cœur, et le blasphème au front."

But it is needless to pause longer before this horrible signal that directs us by a keen desire of escaping from all moral deformity to Catholicism and truth. As Pliny describes monstrous men in distant regions of the earth, marked with all the wild fantastic features that imagination can conceive *, so here may we report not with his fond credulity, but with the soberness and precision of most true witnesses, that we have visited the region where dwell men without hearts. "This sort of people," says Burke, "are so taken up with their theories about the rights of man, that they have totally forgot his nature. Without opening one new avenue to the understanding, they have succeeded in stopping up those that lead to the heart. They have perverted, in themselves and in those that attend to them, all the well-placed sympathies of the human breast." St. Aldhelm seems to have met with this barbarous philosophy, the offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, as void of solid wisdom as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, for he speaks of men torpid in the shadow of death—"auctorem lucis tenebroso corde negantes †." Exterminavit eam aper de sylva. "The boar," says Savonarola, commenting the words, "is an unclean animal, a proud, cruel animal, not domestic, but of the woods. Such is the libidinous, proud, and cruel enemy of the Church ; he will not be corrected ; he refuses to hear truth ; he speaks proudly ; he rises against him that would give good counsel ; he reviles him ; he curses and blasphemes. It is a wild boar, a cruel beast, not a man ; he is not domestic ; he comes not from the house of the Lord, but from the woods ; from the consort of beasts ; from the desert of sins. He knows not God, he knows not the sacraments ; he only loves filth, he embraces dirt, and is delighted with blood. What will that wild boar do then ? He will trample on the vine ; he

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* N. H. lib. vi. 35.

† S. Aldh. Poema de Aris, &c.

will kill those who cultivate it; he will rend it with his tusks. Such is pride, that wishes to be singular, to have no superior, no peace, no companions, but subjects, but slaves, to possess all things for itself, to be not a companion of tribulations, but a lord, a wolf, a cruel and rigid master to eradicate and destroy all *." Christ! how long will such men rage, seeking to devour thy tender flock; these wild boars that have broke into thy vineyard, and left the print of their polluting hoofs on the souls of thy servants. Oh, let them not bring about their damned designs, that stand now at the entrance of the bottomless pit, expecting the watchword to open and let out those dreadful locusts and scorpions, to reinvolve us in that pitchy cloud of infernal darkness, where these lands would never more see the sun of thy truth again, never hope for the cheerful dawn, never more hear the bird of morning sing." And yet these men, perhaps, have been Christians, have perhaps had Christian parents; they are playing now, it may be, the part of those wild dogs in the Pampas, descended from those introduced by the colonists, though now wholly savage, dwelling together in subterranean hollows, and often attacking with bloodthirsty rage the human race, which their progenitors had served and defended. The contest with the infidel at present is like one of those combats between a knight and some monster of the forest, which ancient legends chronicle, in order to paint, not the equal claim of religion and impiety to favour, but the duty of all to scourge that wisdom back to hell. Do you pity him? No; he deserves no pity. Plato says, that to such men indignation, not a morbid sensibility, is due—*διὸ δὴ θυμοειδῆ πρέπειν καὶ πρᾶόν φαμεν ἑκάστοτε εἶναι δεῖν τὸν ἀγαθόν.* When Dante leant against a rock, and wept to see some whom he thought less evil of the sons of darkness, where they were left

> ——— "to learn, as liked them, to despise
> God, and Messiah his anointed king,"

his guide, he says, exclaimed,—

> "What, and art thou too witless as the rest!
> Here pity most doth show herself alive
> When she is dead. What guilt exceedeth his,
> Who with heaven's judgment in his passion strives †?"

You blame such lines, as savouring of a Gothic theology. Well; if you will exclude all supernatural views, accept the consequences. Appealing to nature, the reply will be in burning words of vengeance, Why should we feel compassion? Whom

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* Savonar. in Ps. Qui reg. Is.

† Inf. 20.

do they pity, when with serpent tongue they wither hearts, poison imaginations, dissolve all the sweet bonds of human society, and render even youth selfish and unnatural? O thou cold deceiver, is it thy insane promises that should commend thee, and teach me to forget thy wrongs? Is it thy power and thy legions that should awe my tongue? Yes, thou canst accomplish for me what thou hast already done for others,—

> "Shorten my days, thou canst with sullen sorrow
> Pluck nights from me, but not lend a morrow;
> Thou canst help time to furrow me with age,
> But stop no wrinkle in his pilgrimage."

"As for you, infidel writers of all classes," exclaims a voice while I am pausing here; "as for you, novelists, poets, philosophers, journalists, I make you no concession. The truth is, that I do not think I have committed the least injustice towards you, when I regard you as the most active and most guilty agents of the immense degradation of my country. Far from attenuating, I have added in my new edition; I will add yet more; I will continue to add; and I shall never have but one regret, that of expressing too weakly my indignation and my scorn. I conceal it not. With a voice as free as I do pray to heaven, I would say that, compared with certain authors, three-fourths of the unhappy men whom our laws condemn appear to me innocent. I set up a gibbet here, less to fasten on it obstinate malefactors, than to indicate to travellers the perils of the road. It is not a question of literature now. One must in haste, and with a firm hand, tear off the mask from falsehood, and inflict the deepest brand possible on the insolent face of impiety. Enemies of God, murderers of holy charity, executioners of holy shame, race of Cain, though within your eyes sat twenty thousand deaths, if I succeed in saving my brethren from you, and inspiring them with a just horror for your lying tongue, what care I for your clamour*?" This is impassioned language; but it is not more emphatic than that of one of the greatest geniuses of our age, whose moderation was as remarkable as his judgment. Calculating the force of every word he uttered with the accuracy of a mathematician, composing the last pages of those immortal memoirs which were to convey his voice from the tomb: "Avaunt," he cries, "ye cowardly flatterers of every depravation, ye liars and criminals, who falsify the public conscience, debauch youth, discourage honest men, who are an outrage to virtue, and the spit of the Roman soldier directed to the countenance of Christ!" But all do not merit such reproaches? There are men oppressed

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* Louis Veuillot, Les Libres Penseurs, Préf. 2nd edit.

with doubt, innocent and pure, who would fly from their interior enemy? It is true. Shakspeare, who closed the period of the middle ages, who saw the rise of Protestantism, and who can, perhaps, consequently paint incredulity, as every other mental disease, with as much subjective eloquence as if he had felt it in his own bosom, represents a sceptic lamenting his misfortune, expostulating with himself, and saying,—

> "How blessed am I—
> In my just censure? In my true opinion?
> Alack, for lesser knowledge! How accursed
> In being so blest! There may be in the cup
> A spider steep'd, and one may drink; depart,
> And yet partake no venom; for his knowledge
> Is not infected; but if one present
> The abhorr'd ingredient to his eye—make known
> How he hath drank,—he cracks his gorge, his sides,
> With violent hefts;—I have drank, and seen the
> Spider."

Doubtless, there are some men thus subdued, who would not that the hell within them should infect the untainted minds of others with their own unrest; and, besides, the fact is, that infidelity may often need the physician more than the divine. There are poor morbid invalids, who have some sick offence within their mind, which, acting on a weakened constitution, causes them to cast a jaundiced look at every thing; they are not well in health, and that is all. Leaving, however, sick men to the care of those who, by the right and virtue of their place, ought to construe all the charactery of these sad brows, and, turning to those who would embrace the means to convert doubts to certainty, if they were presented to them, let the voice of calm dispassionate intelligence be heard, and let us proceed to observe that the openings to Catholicity, along this most gloomy road, are not exclusively formed by a consideration of the evil causes and consequences of infidelity, or of the personal character of its adepts. It remains, then, to point out cursorily the issues to it, which truth, by its own force, can effect through the dense covers of the labyrinth, which, however fenced by tangled thorns, can never prove absolutely impervious to it; since, after all, there are no obstacles on earth which divine grace finds wholly insurmountable.

"Why do you avoid me?" asks Xuthus, in the old tragedy. To whom Ion replies, "I do not love to bring such strangers as resemble you to reason;"

*Οὐ φιλῶ φρενοῦν ἀμούσους καὶ μεμηνότας ξένους**.

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* Ion, 526.

Such is not the sentiment or the language of Catholicism. Its mission is for all.

——— "Should not it
Bear the great sway of its affairs with reasons,
Because your speech hath none ?"

The wound of peace is want of certainty, which faith alone can give ; but where this is wanting,—

—— "Modest doubt it calls
The beacon of the wise, the tent that searches
To the bottom of the worst."

"'Videte an mentior,' said Job ; as if," remarks St. Odo, "he said, Do not be satisfied with my assertion, but consider whether it be true. 'Neque enim sancta ecclesia ex magisterio humilitatis instituta recta quæ errantibus dicit, quasi ex auctoritate præcipit sed ex ratione persuadet *.'" Let us then briefly mark the general answers of Catholicism to those who, from this withered region search for truth ; the results of which so often fulfil what was promised through Isaias, saying, " Adducam cæcos in viam quam ignorabant, et semitas quas nesciebant faciam illos calcare ; faciam illis tenebras in lucem, et prava in directa."

Infidelity, making a last stand against the arrows of divine truth, would imply that its own existence arose from a necessity of the natural order, and that faith was only the result of an opposed fate, affirming that some minds are incapable of scepticism, while to others the heaven is as brass, so concluding that it is a question of temperament, or of more or less immersion in nature ; but facts overthrow the theory of predispositions, and of distinct families of minds ; since in all men there is the same natural desire or want of contradiction, the giving way to which constitutes scepticism in regard to Catholicity, and in all the same conscience and judgment, to which faith appeals when demanding the acquiescence which constitutes religion. Accordingly we see that those who began with doubts, as if inseparably clinging to them, are often found to relinquish them and end with certainty, while those who were thought steadfast in believing lapse into the ways on which all sight of faith is eventually lost. Truth in the centre, where all Christian antiquity has known it to reside, can become visible to the most incredulous by means of conscience, by the study of nature, and by observing the Catholic Church in her philosophy and in her discipline. Some men seem to have their eyes put out from childhood, as if by their nurses. But they have still their conscience left—that

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* S. Od. Abb. Clun. Mor. in Job, lib. viii.

clear-sighted companion of which no one can be wholly and for ever destitute. "Conscience," says the Count de Maistre, "is a kind of rack which extorts truth from malefactors. Voltaire himself is often seen stretched upon it." "Je citerai Voltaire," adds the Count in another passage—"Voltaire (car c'est toujours mon héros):" We are not confronted with such scoffers now! Well then, in men, naturally more just, there may be a fearful twilight. In the minds of some well-meaning men, who wander over this earth, there may ensue an undistinguishable mist of thoughts, which rise, like shadow after shadow, darkening each other.

"Partout des sens douteux hérissent leur broussailes."

But consideration will suggest that all these temptations, then, against faith and virtue ought really, according to the Catholic advice, "to be treated as little curs that bark; and which, if men pass on without noticing them, give over; but which, if they attend to them, bark the more *." Consideration will be heard kindling a gleam of hope, while saying,—

"Oh! rest thee tranquil; chase those fearful doubts,
Which ne'er should rack an everlasting soul,
That has such light for its direction!"

Consideration will suggest that the mist may possibly arise from within, in consequence of these secret transgressions, which, by reason, they will perceive, must gradually envelope the heart with clouds. Then their conscience will often, perhaps, hold a kind of paternal discourse, remonstrating with them. "Who would avow," asks Goethe, "that he sought a divorce from his conscience?" "And, after all," as Balmes observes, "small is the number of these men, cuirassed against the assaults of truth and virtue, who reply by a frivolous sophism to the reproaches of common sense, oppose a cold stoicism to the sweetest and most generous inspirations of nature, and dare to display, as a model of philosophy and firmness, the ignorance, obstinacy, and aridity of a frozen heart †." When Madame Campan saw the Queen of France for the last time, this unfortunate princess said of the Duchesse de Luynes, "Sa tête a été l'une des premières tournées par son engouement pour cette malheureuse philosophie; mais son cœur l'avait fait revenir, et j'avais retrouvé en elle une amie." Thus, to use the Père Cahier's words, "when man has deserted the instructions of an honest heart, to attend only, as he says, to the conclusions of reason and science, the progress which remains for him is generally to find himself brought back, by the painful discussions of study, to that which he had rejected, under pretence of philosophy, and to reconquer by a laborious

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* D'Avila.

† C. xi.

effort, the post in which, by an ill-appreciated felicity, he had been originally established. But as this determination to return is itself the work of an honest heart, rather than of science, he finds that at last every thing must be restored to the state in which he found it when he set out, and this is the step which all men cannot bring themselves to make. It is the return of the prodigal child. It is not in virtue of science acquired that one then comes back, but it is in consequence of a remainder of original honesty, or a return to it*." Again, the study of nature can lead back wanderers from this miserable path to ways more consonant with the solidity and security which reason demands for every man. A great philosopher remarks an issue here, of which other men, at least, may be expected to take advantage; for he says, "while the heart expands at the free aspect of nature, there is, at the same time, revealed to the mind an impression of the existence of comprehensive laws, governing the phenomena of the universe—a presentiment of order and of infinity unconsciously awakened by the simple contact with external nature." Laws without a lawgiver, one would think, will not be admitted, unless there be cherished at the bottom some purpose unconnected with the interests of scientific truth; nor can order, without mind producing it, be more intelligible; and so, at once, an avenue is open to that common centre where moral and religious truths are found, without excluding the grandest and most comprehensive view of the material world; for Catholicism, admitting all logical inductions, has its Cosmos based on no pure assumptions, and producing in the mind that contemplates it no less admiration from its keeping steadily before our astonished view the great fact of the existence of God, creator of heaven and and earth. It is Catholicism, accepting the results of scientific discovery, which unfolds in just perspective all things to the view yet dim from their infinitude. It is when by its influence elevated that—

"The spirit seems to stand
High on an isolated pinnacle;
The flood of ages combating below—
The depth of the unbounded universe
Above, and all around
Nature's obedient harmony."

When objections are opposed, as ground for turning from it, founded upon supposed contradictions between the Mosaic books and the discoveries of modern science, the waverer is reminded that Catholicism, as can be proved from divers passages of St. Augustin and other fathers, allows all necessary latitude to the interpretation of Scripture, as far as regards scientific truth; and

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* Monog. de Bourges, 142.

that the inspired book itself requires this expressly, for the reason expressed in the words, "Who shall see Him, and declare Him? And who shall magnify Him as He is from the beginning? There are many things hidden greater than these; for we have seen but a few of his works *." But natural studies are not confined to physics and mathematics, to astronomy and geology. They embrace the study of man; and, in regard to the solution of problems in this department, Catholicism is eminently truthful, rational, and profound. Infidelity, as we before remarked, seeks to lower man, after making him its idol, and to deride the Catholic view of his privileged position in the universe. The profound study of nature leads men to the Catholic appreciation of its grandeur. Man appeared to Aristotle as the centre and object of the whole creation, the conscious possessor of thought, derived from the divine source of thought. Infidelity seeks to place all events and changes of the world under the control of human reason, manifested by public opinion, in the progress of the age. The study of facts leads to a conviction, in accordance with the Catholic doctrine, which may be expressed in the words of the ancient poet:—

> Ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δῆτα τοὺς ταλαιπώρους βροτοὺς
> φρονεῖν λέγουσι; σοῦ γὰρ ἐξηρτήμεθα,
> δρῶμέν τε τοιαῦθ' ἂν σὺ τυγχάνῃς θέλων †.

The Catholic doctrine lies thus at the bottom of all profound contemplation,—all philosophy of east and west having the same centripetence. Then, to solve the mysteries of human nature fallen, Catholicity is without a rival. What was the origin of evil? the cause of man's present condition? To these questions what can the rationalist answer? Nothing! "This philosophy," as a French author remarks, "is on all these fundamental points silent. It knows less about them than the Pagan philosophy knew ‡."

Wander and search as long as you will, it is only the Catholic doctrine which can explain human nature, and the state of things existing around us. Moved by this experience, the sparing and rare worshipper of Heaven, the doctor of the insane wisdom, the Impietatis-consult, may return to himself, and say like the poet, only in a Christian sense,—

> "Parcus Deorum cultor et infrequens,
> Insanientis dum sapientiæ
> Consultus erro, nunc retrorsum
> Vela dare, atque iterare cursus
> Cogor relictos §."

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* Ecclus. xliii. 35.

† Eur. Sup.

‡ Moreau, Consid. sur la Vraie Doctrine.

§ 1 Od. xxxiv.

An able French writer, showing how the self-styled free-thinker, Rousseau, was drawn, in spite of himself, to enter on the ground of Catholicism, observes, that the force of truth constrained him. "Is it not remarkable," he asks, "that the study of nature or of creation should have produced this result, and that on the base placed by a man who wished to isolate himself, for he would not follow either general opinion or revelation, neither ideas transmitted, nor ideas revealed, Catholic truth should have thus descended? so that the works which were intended, perhaps, to be most hostile to it should, nevertheless, have been constrained to pay homage to its truth*?"

Again, there is always among the pervious issues the great and singular contrast presented by the Catholic religion in its philosophy and in its discipline, when considered in relation with every antagonist. Goethe speaks of his reading the Système de la Nature, and of the pain which such views produced in him. "But how hollow and empty," he says, "did we feel in this melancholy, atheistical, half-night, in which earth vanished with all its images, and heaven with all its stars. The book caused us a hearty dislike to all philosophy, while we threw ourselves into living knowledge, experience, action, and poetizing with all the more liveliness and passion." Johnson says, that the strongest effort of the infidel Lord Rochester's Muse is his poem upon "Nothing." The choice of the subject is characteristic of the school. Its adept

——— "has invented lying words and modes
Empty and vain as his own coreless heart;
Evasive meanings, nothings of much sound
To lure the heedless victim to the toils
Spread round the valley of its paradise."

Of what use, reason itself will say, to substitute the soul of the universe, spirit of nature, necessity, for God? of what use even to rebuild what, to say the least, need never be rebuilt; as the German, French, or Scotch metaphysicians busy themselves from ignorance or disdain of the lessons of history? Catholicism has no want of such disquisitions, and can say to those who urge them to the wanderer who feels impelled ever to set out afresh,—

"Such as you prevent him from sweet rest,
Nourish the cause of his awaking: I
Do come with words as med'cinal as true;
Honest as either; to purge him from that humour
That presses him from sleep."

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* Études sur les Idées, &c. i. 203.

On the other hand, I suppose it will be allowed, that Catholicism is not wholly void of high intellectual food for minds ambitious of philosophic dignity. Catholicism, I presume, is found to be not absolutely speechless in the schools of science and of the world. What prevents these pure and innocent sceptics from trying for once what such minds as St. Thomas and St. Bernard, Malebranche and Bossuet, propose? When, as they acknowledge, every thing gives way before them and behind them—when the past lies in the distance in dreary monotony, like a city of the dead—when the future offers them nought—when they see their whole being inclosed within the narrow circle of the present, what prevents them from clasping this moment of time in their arms, and trying, for once, whether it cannot, as the Catholic school predicts, become the earnest of a blissful eternity? Philosophy, exclusive of Catholicism, presents a desert where the death-threatening drought prevails; and where, too, by the play of the refracted rays of light, producing the phenomenon of the mirage, the thirsty traveller is every where pursued by the illusive image of a cool, rippling, watery mirror. What prevents them from turning to another region of thought, where experience proves that the greatest intelligences find rest? Catholicism's grave voice repeats such words as all cannot resist; it utters with a just meaning what poets misapply, calmly demanding,—

——————— " Are not thy days
Days of unsatisfying listlessness?
——————— Is not thy youth
A vain and feverish dream of sensualism?
Are not thy views of unregretted death
Drear, comfortless, and horrible?
——— ——————— When the grave
Has swallowed up thy memory and thyself,
Dost thou desire the bane that poisons earth
To twine its roots around thy coffin'd clay,
Spring from thy bones, and blossom on thy tomb,
That of its fruit thy babes may eat and die?"

"Exurge, veritas," cries Tertullian, "et quasi de tenebris erumpe." The light of Catholicism shone on Goethe in his youth, when he saw that a separate philosophy was not necessary, as the whole of it was already contained in religion and poetry. "I stubbornly denied," he says, "that these must be first founded on philosophy. For, as in religion, a certain faith in the inscrutable must have place, the philosophers appeared to me to be in a very false position who would explain it from their own field of vision. Besides, it was quickly proved from the history of philosophy, that one man always sought a ground different from that of another; and that the sceptic, in the end,

pronounced them all groundless and useless. Therefore, with the most ancient men and schools I was best pleased, because poetry, religion, and philosophy were completely combined into one." The philosopher did not avail himself of this issue to Catholicism; but no one can point it out in clearer language; and we may feel sure that all men do not refuse the deliverance which it offers.

In fine, the Catholic Church, by her external discipline, by her rites and ceremonies, her manners and institutions, reveals herself through the deepest obscurity, and sometimes wins back wanderers to her bosom. Solitary reason has often its misgivings. The Catholic Church invites it to the light which reigns within her, to assume the intellectual strength which union yields. "Come near me," she says to the victim of blind fancies; "thou dost weave a chain thou canst not break; thou art possessed of thoughts too swift for one lone human breast." Chateaubriand, on his journey to Prague, detained at the Austrian frontier, writes from his inn at Nittenau, describing the appearance of the peasants flocking before his window to night prayers in the church opposite to it, and says, "I wish that I was not too fatigued to leave the inn, that I might go to pray this evening with all these men, women, and children whom the Church is now calling together. These Germans, seeing me kneel in the midst of them, would receive me in virtue of the union of a common faith. When will the day come when philosophers in their temple will bless a philosopher fresh arrived with post horses, and offer with the stranger a similar prayer to a God, respecting whom all philosophers are agreed? The chaplet of the curate is more sure; and I'll hold to it*." Yet even these philosophers themselves are, at times, equally struck with a sense of the contrast. "Faisons les fiers, tant que nous voudrons," says a French infidel historian, "philosophes et raisonneurs que nous sommes aujourd'hui. Mais qui de nous, parmi les agitations du mouvement moderne, ou dans les captivités volontaires de l'étude, dans ses âpres et solitaires poursuites, qui de nous entend sans émotion le bruit de ces belles fêtes chrétiennes, la voix touchante des cloches et comme leur doux reproche maternel? Qui ne voit, sans les envier, ces fidèles qui sortent à flots de l'Eglise, qui reviennent de la table divine rajeunis et renouvelés? L'esprit reste ferme, mais l'âme est bien triste. Le croyant de l'avenir, qui n'en tient pas moins de cœur au passé, pose alors la plume et ferme le livre; il ne peut s'empêcher de dire. 'Ah! que ne suis-je avec eux, un des leurs, et le plus simple, le moindre de ces enfants†!'" We read, that the dry tree which stood near the cell of St. Theresa, where

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* Mém.

† Michelet, Hist. de France, v. 145.

she died in the extasy produced by a glorious vision, suddenly revived, and sent forth fresh shoots and leaves: affecting emblem of the dry, withered soul, existing sometimes in the closest relation with innocence and sanctity, and which, when confronted with some of the moving spectacles that are seen within the Catholic Church—the first communion of a child, the death of a saintly wife or sister,—has been seen to bedew its hard, gnarled trunk, to renew its faith, and send forth shoots that were never to dry up again, but to flourish and to bloom for the eternal years.

But I have cited witnesses, you will reply, who can prove, by their own experience, the inefficacy of these signals, and the difficulty of taking advantage of these openings? Alas! it is too true. This other dry tree, never again to send forth leaves, let what will happen round it, is a fitting emblem of the man who perseveres in infidelity. His very prayers are dried up at the source. "Here! and here!" he cries, striking his breast and forehead; "I cannot pray, all is so void—so barren! No, I will not pray. Heaven shall not have that triumph, nor hell that pastime." From the beginning we announced that all these ways of pride, and the whole region through which they wound, were evil, and, generally, fatal. Of pride, Alanus Magnus says, "Hæc prima fuit quæ hominem dejecit, et ultima est qui ei ad Dominum redeunti se objicit*." The natural world seems, in some respects, furnished with preservatives of which the spiritual world is destitute. Forests intercept the spawn of mosses and lichens which are wafted by the winds, and which would otherwise spread a noxious vegetable growth over fertile land. The trees next to a marshy heath are often covered with lichens so as to hide the whole bark; while those trees on the other side have been free from these parasites. But where are the analogous defences against the spiritual contagion which has already spread far and wide, from man to man, from family to family, from nation to nation, and which seems every year to threaten a still more extensive desolation of the earth, till it shall be infected from pole to pole? The progress was predicted at the period of the first change remarked in the disease, when open infidelity revolutionized the state of France. "With each new generation," it was said, "the spirit of innovation receives new partisans more and more enterprizing; and with each generation that passes away the ancient opinions lose one of their supports. Europe is about to possess a race of men totally new†." When the stranger first, on leaving school, visited Germany and Switzerland, the contrast between the popular

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* Sum. de Arte Prædicat. 10.

† Theiner, Hist. des Institut. d'Éducat. tom. ii. 39.

mind formed by traditional faith where Catholicism reigned, and the same mind where it was unknown, could not possibly escape the attention, even of a boy like him. It was as if one had suddenly passed amongst a wholly different race of beings; for at that time, whatever were the faults, or crimes, or superstitions of the Catholic population, there was striking evidence, in every thing around one—yes, even in the very character of the faults of the worst, that the Church had Christianized the world, and laid hold, as a keen observer says, "of the heart of humanity." Amongst them one could feel, in some respects, like Lavater, who, as Goethe complains, found it impossible to understand how a man could live and breathe without, at the same time, being a Christian. Will it be always easy to form this conception of humanity? Is there not reason to fear that, as for good, so for evil, means that appear contemptible are often the most potent? It is not to be feared, that a few years of peace, during which has been witnessed every where the immigration of a nation of travellers, to whom, in one sense, the term eccentric can justly be applied—men whose sneers and execration are for all Catholic things, who pass, dispensing gold and scorning the sacred laws that prophets did proclaim, wreaking their scoffs on priests and monks, or eyeing with speechless pride the altar and the cross—may have proved, not only "grande mortalis ævi spatium," as Tacitus, with his usual melancholy, says of only fifteen years, but a long period in the life of nations—may have effected what neither the tempest of the sword, the flood of tyranny whose sanguine waves rose to overwhelm faith, nor the whirlwind of revolutions conjured up for the express propagation of infidelity, which preceded that peaceful invasion, had been able to accomplish? The influence of that radically unchristian character which every year issues from British shores, and from the Anglican fold itself, may produce effects upon generations which have retained some vestige of the manners of Charlemagne and St. Louis beyond what could be predicted or imagined possible. Lo! what a change is come since I first spake! These institutions, so holy and so venerable; these manners, so primitive and so engaging; these thoughts, so true and so profound, seem darkly now to fade in hideous ruin! Is time to be the conqueror? Is that hoary giant to rule the world with such undivided sway, that nations, once gloriously delivered from the necessity of perishing, are to fall in succession beneath his silent footsteps? Yet, O Church of Jesus Christ, time shall be forgiven, though it change all but thee! Fair star of morn! my soul's delight! Mother of Christ! thou still lookest from the crystalline skies; thou dost ever smile; and that smile is Paradise! By those even who turn from thee, the unchangeable will must be accomplished. Boast

as they may at the fall of each majestic ruin which once upheld truth amongst them, sooner or later, if not in life and time, at least in death, or in what follows it, men will have to behold its triumph, its supreme and final victory :—

——— "Evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness ; when at last
Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed, and self-consumed."

CHAPTER IX.

THE ROAD OF SADNESS.

A GLOOMING peace this morning brings over the forest, and the sun, as if for sorrow, will not show her head. Sin, pride, misbelief, and infidelity, thus traversed already, large experience has been made of the especial evil which gives its name to another dark road which here receives the wanderer, who may be heard exclaiming as he enters on it,—

"Away ! nor let me loiter in my song ;
  For we have many a mountain path to tread,
And many a varied shore to pass along—
  By pensive Sadness, not by Fiction led."

So, in effect, as another poet sings,—

"Away to the dismal swamp he speeds ;
  His path is rugged and sore ;
Through tangled juniper, beds of reeds,
Through many a fen where the serpent feeds,
  And sorrow has trod before."

Most men can summon recollections that attest the accordance between natural scenery and the impressions which await us here. "We started early," says a Spanish traveller. "The moon had just gone down, and the morning was pitchy dark and piercingly cold. We soon entered the dismal wood which I had already traversed, and through which we wended our way for some time slowly and mournfully. Not a sound was to be heard save the trampling of the mules ; not a breath of air moved the leafless branches ; no animal stirred in the thickets ; no bird, not even the owl, flew over our heads ; all seemed

desolate and dead." Yet the advance to this passage is often imperceptible; so that we may hear men say, with Dante,—

"How first I enter'd it, I scarce can say,
Such sleepy dulness in that instant weigh'd
My senses down, when the true path I left*."

But here we find ourselves amidst the labyrinths through which all must pass who lose the main way in this region of the forest.

——— "Not verdant here
The foliage, but of dusky hue; not light
The boughs, and tapering, but leaning all,
And matted thick; fruits there are none, but thorns
Instead, with venom fill'd†."

Further on rises, we are told, a stony desert, bare as any eagle-baffling mountain, black, wintry, dead, unmeasured, without herb, insect, beast, or shape or sound of life. It is the neighbourhood of those bleak ravines that causes all things now to wear this melancholy aspect, as if the trees felt the chilling influence that descends in fitful blasts from them. The birch is said to advance highest in regions nearest to the Pole, whereas in the Temperate Zone the pine grows highest, leaving the birches lower down. Here all seems to shrink away and to bend despondingly, wearing only shades of Dante's dusky hue; and upon the ground the rue alone spreads its bitter leaf. Pliny, speaking of trees, says that there are some kinds naturally sad—"Non omnes florent; et sunt tristes quædam, quæque non sentiant gaudia annorum, as the ilex, the larch, the pine, and the juniper; omnibusque iis dura facies semper. Sic et hominum multis fortuna sine flore est‡." Over this whole tract, as over Byron's abbey, there moans a strange unearthly sound: that echo seemed to him as often musical. He says it is

——— "a dying accent driven
Through the huge arch, which soars and sinks again;"

and then he adds,—

"Some deem it but the distant echo given
Back to the night-wind by the waterfall,
And harmonised by the old choral wall;
Sad but serene, it sweeps o'er tree or tower.
The cause I know not, nor can solve; but such
The fact; I 've heard it—once perhaps too much."

The wilderness before us, too, has its pure melancholy voice, its lamentations, and its groans:—

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* Inf. i. † Id. 13. ‡ xvi. 40.

——— "Ingeminant austri, et densissimus imber
Nunc nemora ingenti vento, nunc littora plangunt *."

Thus does the forest, and all that it contains, present an analogy with the whole of living nature. "Scimus enim," to use the mysterious words, "quod omnis creatura ingemiscit, et parturit usque adhuc. Non solum autem illa, sed et nos ipsi primitias spiritus habentes, et ipsi intra nos gemimus." Some steps along this road all men of every character have to take; "since," as Antonio de Guevara says, "the office of humanity is to feel sorrows, and the office of reason to dissemble them." "Pope Innocent III. thought," says his biographer, "what is a sure antidote against human pride in all relations, that as the bird is born to fly, so man is born to suffer, but at the same time also, to maintain a persevering struggle against evil and the powers of darkness †." Isaiah says, in describing his visions, "Onus Babylonis, onus Moab, onus in Arabia, onus Ægypti, onus Damasci, onus deserti maris, onus Tyri, that is," remarks Guevara, "he saw them loaded with burdens; but under the yoke of Christ all were comforted." Look at the nations now; look at individuals; where is there no burden seen? Each seems at times to say, in the desolating words which Dante heard in hell,—

——— "Hence, perdition-doom'd, I rove
A prey to rankling sorrow in this garb ‡."

No insects will eat into the heart of English oak, as many species contrive to penetrate, sooner or later, into most other timber. The pines found in Ireland, which in durability rival cedar, are similarly proof against them: but where is the human heart into which the worm of sadness does not sometimes creep? The cedar of Lebanon only escapes from corroding insects in consequence of its bitterness, as men can only cure melancholy by accepting and imbibing, as it were, the austere doctrine of the cross. "Multa mecum agito," says Fulbert of Chartres, writing to king Robert, "non ut ærumnas in hac vita evadere coner, quod est impossibile §." Even to pass the narrow mystic gate pointed out by heaven to mortals, men have to take this sad road at times,—

"By walking mournfully, as all must walk
Who tread his slander'd footsteps."

Don Diego de Camina was happy, but calumniated, and Antonio de Guevara wrote to him, saying, "You must not refuse to pay your pound of wax, seigneur, since you are inscribed in the confraternity of those who are envied."

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* Georg. i. 331.

† Hurter, Geschichte Inn. xx.

‡ Inf. 27.

§ Epist. xc.

"Sadness returns," says the poet, "as regularly after joy, for each man, as the Bear revolves round the Pole,"—

> 'Αλλ' ἐπὶ πῆμα καὶ χαρὰ
> πᾶσι κυκλοῦσιν, οἷον ἄρ-
> κτου στροφάδες κέλευθοι*.

Such considerations extort even from the noble Sophocles a most desponding cry,—

> ἰὼ γενεαὶ βροτῶν,
> ὡς ὑμᾶς ἴσα καὶ τὸ μη-
> δὲν ζώσας ἐναριθμῶ †.

Who are those that are met with on this road? We shall pass upon it a great variety of characters. In the first place is seen the natural man, who inherits melancholy from Adam. Hear his complaint—

> "My apprehensions come in crowds;
> I dread the rustling of the grass;
> The very shadows of the clouds
> Have power to shake me as they pass;
> I question things, and do not find
> One that will answer to my mind,
> And all the world appears unkind."

Or hear the poet who describes him:—

> "Per nemus ignotum non certis passibus errans
> Pervenit in lucum;"

then he represents him lamenting thus,—

> "Et placet, et video; sed quod videoque placetque
> Non tamen invenio; tantus tenet error amantem.
> Quòque magis doleam, nec nos mare separat ingens,
> Nec via, nec montes, nec clausis mœnia portis ‡."

Who does not find in such lines a picture of himself when he was a youth? Who has not wandered thus, a solitary boy, over heaths and in umbrageous groves, led by a kind of dreamy vision, grasping at something unknown, invisible, and grieving for joy departed, before his face had exchanged its soft down, welcoming the spring with tears, the harbinger of summer with tears, and sighing while conscious of ignorance as to the means of having hopes realized according to the full rapturous images of beauty that floated before his imagination, which no realities on earth can equal. Along with these, other wanderers are overtaken on

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* Trach. 130. † Œd. Tyr. 1186. ‡ iii. 7.

this road, men enduring those sorrowful moments when some noble illusion is lost, some beautiful hope destroyed, some holy ambition dead, some great affection extinguished, leaving in the heart a bitter disgust of life, an irremediable void, and teaching it to comprehend and love those solitary asylums for the devoted soul which Catholicism has created in every age to receive and console sadness such as theirs. How would Cicero have valued such asylums when he spoke of "that death which was the most apt way for escaping from intolerable sadness," and when he said that the cause of his silence was profound discouragement, "et quædam infinita vis lacrymarum et dolorum." In fact, many of those who are met upon this road pursue their way without attempting to express their melancholy by words. There are sufferings which have no tongue. The silence observed by so many of the personages represented by Æschylus producing so grand an effect, is only an instance of adherence to nature in the poet. Sophocles, too, supplies an example in the silent grief of the young captive maiden in the Trachiniæ. She utters not a word. "She will not break silence more than hitherto," says Lichas. "The least word has not escaped her lips; wholly given up to grief, she has never ceased weeping since she left her country *,"—

"Jura sui mœrens, inconsolabile vulnus
Mente gerit tacita; lacrymisque absumitur omnis †."

History shows many such mourners. A deputation of twelve lay, and of twelve ecclesiastical, peers went to Windsor to endeavour to procure an expression of the royal will from Henry VI. The bishop of Chester presented him with the Articles, but he replied not. The prelate explained, but no word or sign could he elicit from the king. The lamentations and exhortations of the lords had no greater effect. They withdrew and returned; but in vain; the royal person breathed, but no longer spoke. "Let us pause," says a French historian who describes the scene, "in presence of this mute image of expiation. This silence speaks loudly. Before it there can be neither French nor English, but only men ‡." The present times are not left without examples of this kind. Lulworth, Holyrood, Prague, Frohsdorf!—what sublime silence there! There are mourners whom it would be unholy even to pity, after the manner of those men who seem incapable of appreciating any spectacle whatever that bears a resemblance to the mystic state:—

"Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice."

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* 325. † Met. v. ‡ Michelet, v. 306.

Historians themselves may be said to frequent this road with men who thus represent merely the deep secret impressions of nature. It is in fact they who enable us to understand the sorrowful traces which human events have left in the scenery around us. "Leaving Coimbra," says a recent traveller, "we came to the Ponte das Lagrimas, and passed through a blooming garden called the Garden of Tears. The dark cypress waving over the fountain, the weeping willows that surround it, and the stream murmuring along its rocky bed, are suited to the mournful tradition that has thrown its spell over the scene." The traveller in whose contemplations, as Humboldt says of those arising from a boundless sea horizon, "there mingles, as with all human joy, a breath of sadness and of longing," partakes somewhat of the same character; as John della Casa indicates when saying, "As the pilgrim, if the memory of his sweet home oppress him, travels sorrowful through forests and savage mountains, so did I pursue the unequal way, following some whom I perceived afar; but my feet were less prompt than my desires; so, curtailing the sweet hours of rest and sleep, I added to the day a part of the night, to be able to reach their honoured company." Again, we find in this procession many men who, without being personally affected by them, watch the political and religious events of the world, and meditate on the present as on the past and future. "When the sad news of the fall of Jerusalem came," says William of Newbury, "the hearts of all Christians were struck with horror and desolation *."

Five popes are recorded to have died of grief in consequence of the public calamities of Christendom, caused by the Mahometan power. Of this sadness died Urban III., on the taking of Jerusalem in 1187; Lucius II., on the fall of Edessa in 1144; Nicholas V., on the loss of Constantinople in 1453; Adrian VI., on the taking of Rhodes in 1522; and Clement IX., on the fall of Candia in 1669. Hence the lines beginning with an allusion to the latter, thus—

"Ut moriens modulatur olor, sic Candia eidem
  Non moduli at gemitus causaque mortis erat.
Sic Hierosolymam lugens Urbanus obivit,
  Constantinopolim sic Nicolæ gemis.
Lucius Edessam sic luxerat ante secundus,
  Planxisti amissam sic Adriane Rhodum."

The success of the Turks in taking Damietta is thus deplored by Richard of St. Germain:—

"Quantus dolor, quanta calamitas!
Oh, quis pudor, qualis anxietas!

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* Guiliel. Neubrig. Rer. Anglic. lib. iii. 22.

Quod succubuit Christianitas,
Impiorum gaudet impietas.
Jesu bone, si fas est dicere,
Cur sic placuit nos dejicere?
Mori malo quam ultra vivere
Vinci videns debentes vincere[*]."

"Alas!" exclaims St. Thomas of Villanova, "the church of God is now reduced to a corner of the world. The empire of Constantinople, Greece, Thessaly, Macedonia, Hungary, and Rhodes, being all now in the power of the Turks, while the rest of Europe falls a prey to the heresy of Luther and Calvin, so that only Italy and Spain, and a part of France, remain in constant faith, while the Turks still advance, and the way to Rome seems open to them. Oh, wretched and deplorable calamity, to be mourned with tears of blood! Oh, that ancient majesty! how is it brought to confusion and shame[†]!" "'Deus virtutum—vide, et visita vineam istam.' Alas!" exclaims Savonarola, after citing these words; "alas! where is Jerusalem? In the hands of infidels. Behold, O Lord, with the eyes of thy mercy, the orb of the earth, and its plenitude—not the plenitude of graces, but the plenitude of sinners, but the plenitude of ignorance, but the plenitude of miseries! Behold thy vine, thy church, thy republic, thy Christian people; behold, and have mercy, and visit this vine! For still it has roots, still the branches live. From the beginning of the world it began, and it has never failed, and it never will fail; for thou hast said, 'Ecce, enim vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem seculi.' It can diminish, therefore; but altogether fail, never. This vine, therefore, is the vine which thou hast planted—one spirit, one faith, one baptism, one God and Lord of all, who is all in all. Visit then this vine; for thy visitation will guard its spirit; but the Psalmist adds, 'Et perfice eam.' Not alone visit it, but perfect it; for it is very imperfect. It wishes to live well; but it does not wish to suffer evils; yet it has examples before its eyes. It has the prophets; it has the apostles; it has the martyrs, and all the saints of God—yea, thy only-begotten Son himself. It wishes to follow them; it wishes to do well, to obtain their glory; but it does not wish to endure adversity. It is very imperfect. 'Perfice eam, Domine, emitte spiritum tuum, et perficietur[‡]!" Thus are the saints themselves made melancholy by the disasters of the world and of the Church. "In multa sapientia multa indignatio, multa tristitia." Neither is it difficult to recognise in this grave company the brotherhood

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[*] Ap. Dom. Gattula, Hist. Abb. Cassinens.

[†] Dom. ii. Quad. Concio i. et pro Exped. advers. Turc.

[‡] In Ps. Qui reg. Is. Med.

of poets lamenting that ever and anon will sadness come again, adding,—

—— "Scarce seen,
And slight withal, may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever; it may be a sound—
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring—
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound.

"And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind;
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind;
Which, out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind;
The cold, the changed, perchance the dead, anew;
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many! yet how few!"

It was the same with poets from the first, if you will hear another saying,—

"Cum traheret silvas Orpheus, et dura canendo
Saxa ——— mœstus erat *."

"The spirit of the Edda," says Schlegel, "is tragic; for a constant veneration and contemplation of nature, if unaccompanied by a knowledge of God, invariably produces, in healthy and vigorous minds, a tragic and melancholy impression of life. Greece herself presents the same phenomenon. Those fragments of the verses of Sappho, which deserve to be numbered among the choicest treasures flung by the shipwreck of a former world upon the stream of time, borne down to the shores of the present, evince a lofty tenderness, which seems, as it were, the offspring of a deep and cureless melancholy." Humboldt speaks of the Idyll as having arisen from the longing for a lost ideal, or as if, in the human breast, a degree of melancholy were ever blended with the deeper feelings which the view of nature inspires.

In fine, considered under the influence of nature alone, whether brought in presence of the facts of Christian times, or left under the sole impressions of reason, or of the dim ineffectual light of primeval tradition, all men of every class seem constrained to pursue, under dark melancholy boughs, this pensive road. All seem to desire that powder of Egypt which Helen put into the wine of Menelaus, to dissipate the melancholy of himself and of his guests †. You may ridicule or condemn the

* iv.

† Od. iv. 216.

sentiment, but you may as well forbid the mountain pines to wag their high tops, and to make no noise when they are fretted with the gusts of heaven, as seek, by human means, to pacify the human heart, and soften that deep root of dejection which is so deeply seated there.

But let me change this theme, which grows too sad, and lay this sheet of sorrows on the shelf of yon broad branches of an oak. Let us pause here. The autumnal winds have made a natural couch of leaves, as if spell-bound, in that recess, which successive seasons seem not to have disturbed for years. Sadness is a terrible and malignant disease, evil in itself, evil in its consequences, evil in its origin. Catholicity alone supplies the remedy, and many who find themselves on this road of human life will sooner or later repair to it, and so, at last, become united with truth, which is combined with sweet serenity, and, in fine, with joy for ever. We have sufficiently observed their unchecked wanderings—it is time to mark when the fountains of such sorrow, swift and deep, seem to suspend the tumult of their flow, how—

> —— "neither did they speak nor weep,
> Yet pale and calm—with passion thus subdued,
> Like evening shades that o'er the mountains creep,
> They moved towards their home."

Whither would you have turn sorrowful, desponding men? "I wish to die," says Hercules, oppressed with grief. "You speak like one of the vulgar," replies Theseus;

Εἴρηκας ἐπιτυχόντος ἀνθρώπου λόγους [*].

The consolation that such words administer is hardly to be considered adequate; and mark how closely are all these gloomy ways united, and how the demon glides invariably along them all; for St. Chrysostom says that "grief is more powerful to injure than all diabolic action; that the devil conquers by melancholy, and that, if you remove melancholy, he cannot injure any one [†]." The poet, even describing Satan, seems to imply that the fiend, all full of scorn and buffoonery as he is, must be under the same influence, for he says,—

> —— "And settled in his face I see
> Sad resolution."

Melancholy and sadness, reproved by the sacred text, which says, "Tristitia viri nocet cordi [‡]," are found, as we have seen,

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[*] Herc. Furens, 1248.

[†] De Providentia, lib. iii.

[‡] Prov. xxiv.

on every other path but that which leads the soul homewards. "Acedia, which sounds as a barbarous word," says Cæsarius, "signifies the vice which extinguishes all spiritual joy, rendering all spiritual works, as it were, acid and insipid *." This is the spirit of the world which rules supreme upon them all. There we know that—

"Each substance of a grief hath twenty shadows
Which show like grief itself."

There, as a great English author says, "every man will have his hours of seriousness; but, like the hours of rest, they are often ill-chosen and unwholesome:"—

"Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours,
Makes the night morning, and the noon-tide night.
Princes have but their titles for their glories,
An outward honour for an inward toil;
And, for unfelt imaginations,
They often feel a world of restless cares."

Sadness, in its consequences, by Catholicity alone is pronounced to be most evil. "De tristitia nascitur malitia, rancor, pusillanimitas, desperatio, torpor, vagatio mentis †." This is what was said in the ninth century of the temper, which, in the nineteenth, as we shall soon observe, is so vainly glorified. The road of sadness then, let us proceed to remark, leads men, by many signals and openings, through which they can behold the divine truth of the Catholic religion, by simply observing how faith supplies a remedy for the sadness of nature, for the sadness of the world, for the sadness of the imagination, for the sadness of the intelligence, for the sadness of sin, and for the sadness of virtue. Let us pause a few moments at each of these avenues in the order in which they are thus presented to us.

The sadness of nature seems to be represented by the forest at certain seasons, as Alanus Magnus observes in his book, "De Planctu Naturæ ‡." "A moral character," says a French author, following the same idea, "belongs to autumnal scenes. These leaves which fall like our years—these flowers which fade like our hours—these clouds which fly like our illusions—this sun which grows cold like our loves—these rivers which freeze like our life—seem to have secret relations with our destinies:"—

"This is the winter of the world; and here
We die, even as the winds of autumn fade,
Expiring in the froze and foggy air."

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* Illust. Rer. iv. 27.

† Regino. Abb. Prum. de Eccles. Dis. lib. i. 146.

‡ 291.

"Happy," says the sacred voice, "is he that hath had no sadness of his mind, and who is not fallen from his hope *." Nature knows of no such mortal. "The first melancholy," says a French author, "is that which springs from a vague desire of happiness in youth, when one has no experience; the melancholy of later life arises from the knowledge of things appreciated and judged." Suppose all material enjoyments in his power, man, without the divine consolations of faith, will experience the truth of his observation. "When he was here," says Imogen of her absent husband, "he did incline to sadness, and ofttimes not knowing why." It is the same remark, the same confession, in all ages:—

> "Let none disturb us. Why this change of thought?
> The sad companion, dull-eyed melancholy,
> By me so used a guest is, not an hour in the
> Day's glorious walk, or peaceful night,
> Can breed me quiet."

Calderon represents Fenix uttering the same complaint in her Moorish garden: "Of what advantage is my beauty, since my life passes without joy! I suffer a vague, profound melancholy. Nothing pleases my eyes, not even the charming aspect of the immense sea, and the delicious shades of this garden, where the waves and flowers rival each other in grace and splendour. The garden, envying the sea the movement of its flood, seeks to imitate it, and, aided by the loving zephyr which breathes over it, resembles an ocean of flowers; while the sea, forgetful of its majesty, yields the aspect of a verdant plain. But all this says nothing to my heart; and, doubtless, my sorrow must be very great when I remain insensible to the sky and the earth, to the sea and to the garden †." "Oblivioni datus sum tanquam mortuus à corde ‡." Such cries escape even the Church at matins, on the second feria.

"Sadness is most apt to assail us in the middle of the day," says St. John Climachus, "as vain-glory chooses the morning §." Perhaps it is so also with the periods of our life. It was on the thirty-sixth anniversary of his birth-day, being at Missolonghi, the year in which he died, that Byron composed the lines—

> "My days are in the yellow leaf;
> The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
> The worm, the canker, and the grief,
> Are mine alone!
>
> "If thou regrett'st thy youth, why live?
> The land of honourable death
> Is here:—up to the field, and give
> Away thy breath!

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* Eccles. xiv.

† The Constant Prince.

‡ Ps. xxx.

§ Scal. Par. xxvii.

"Seek out—less often sought than found,
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest."

Yet nature, when a later hour sounds for it, does not take leave willingly of these present walks, and of the graces that attend them. The Christian poet himself betrays an interior struggle when he prepares to take final leave of song:—

"Et jam dulce iter exactum, finemque laborum
Adventare queror. Meus inter carmina jam sol
Paulatim cadit, et lassis superinjicit umbram,
Otiaque indicit, et longa silentia musis*."

What must be the evening of life to those whose thoughts are limited to the confines of mortality! That hour is represented in the painting by Gleyre, in the Luxembourg, which shows a man of mature age seated on the shores of a broad river at sun-set:—

"How richly glows the water's breast
Before us, tinged with evening hues,
While, facing thus the crimson west,
A boat her parting course pursues."

That boat contains a gay, smiling company of young boys and maidens, who sing to the music of the harp, and scatter flowers on the stream in which they dip their naked feet. The sail is just hoisted, and the waves already ripple beneath the prow:—

"The barge they play in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burns on the water: the poop is beaten gold;
Purple the sails, and so perfumed, that
The winds are love-sick with them; the oars are silver,
Which, to the tune of flutes, keep stroke;
While the gay silken tackle
Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands."

The forsaken spectator looks mournfully on this departure of all that is sweet and beautiful on earth. A harp, with broken strings, has fallen from his hand:—

"As he sits gazing in a mood of grief,
The boat departs, borne by the musical air
Along the waves, which sing and sparkle under
The rapid keel. The winged shapes stand there—
Children with silver-shining wings so fair
That, as their bark does through the waters glide,
The shadow of the lingering waves do wear
Light as from starry beams—
The boat recedes too fast, while he seems lingering there."

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* Ceva, Jesus Puer, lib. ix.

They seem to motion to him a last and kind farewell. But they pass with solemn speed; majestically on flies the bark, obedient to the sweep of odorous winds. There remains the sad, forsaken one, with the lyre at his feet; and near it the stranger would place a scroll, on which is written, "Transitoria amantibus sine fide advesperascit." The boat has fled with unrelaxing speed. "Vision of love!" the poet cries aloud, "I have beheld the path of thy departure. Death shall not divide us long." He dies, saluted by all the graces and all the smiles of nature; yet, left alone with these, what hope can be inspired by such words? Truly it seems as if he is already stranded on the last fatal shore, and that Dante alludes to such as are in his condition when he says,—

———— "I noted then
How Virgil gazed with wonder upon him
Thus abjectly extended on the cross
In banishment eternal*."

But, if he turns to the central light, a change comes over the spirit of his dream. The forsaken one is comforted. "Mane nobiscum, Domine," he cries, "advesperascit." Mane nobiscum, Lord of youth, Lord of life, Lord of love and joy. He raises a withered branch that is still green at top, and points to the motto, "In hac spe vivo."

As for the vague sadness of nature, so also for the sadness of the world, Catholicism supplies the remedy, and thereby reveals its divine truth to those who are prepared for appreciating it, by the weariness and satiety of prosperous fortune, as well as by the losses and calamities of one whom the world frowns on. "The world," says Henry Suso, "lies and deceives. It promises much, and gives little. Its joy is short, and unstable, and mutable. To-day it offers many pleasant, agreeable things. To-morrow it has only pain and sorrow for the mind. Such is the play of this world†." Prosperity itself in the world is found to be attended often by the pale companion; for, as the Greek poet says, no one can be satisfied with prosperity,—

Τὸ μὲν εὖ πράσσειν ἀκόρεστον ἔφυ
πᾶσι βροτοῖσιν‡.

"A man may be rich, and honoured," says Sophocles, elsewhere; "but if the good of cheerfulness should be wanting—

—— *ἐὰν δ' ἀπῇ*
τούτων τὸ χαίρειν—

I count all the rest but a shadow and smoke§." Menelaus says

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* Inf. 23.

† Dialog. 10.

‡ Agamem. 1331.

§ Antigone, 1170.

mournfully to Telemachus, who is admiring the splendour of his palace and possessions,—

> Ὥς οὔτοι χαίρων τοῖσδε κτεάτεσσιν ἀνάσσω*.

Forethought, which is so great a good, becomes an evil to many men, filling their eyes with prophetic tears. "Wild beasts of the forest," as Alanus de Insulis says, "fly from the evils which they see, and, once escaped from their presence, rest in security; but we are tormented with the past and future—nemo tantum præsentibus miser est†." And, besides, the rich man, surrounded with all luxuries, will often be found to invoke the clouds of contrary fortune, saying, with Don John, "Any bar, any cross, any impediment, will be medicinable to me." And yet it seldom happens that men have long to wait for such vicissitudes:—

> ——— "Diu, res si qua diu mortalibus usquam
> Viximus."

The reserve is justified; for what is there on earth that can be long enjoyed?—

> "Les jours se suivent pas à pas,
> Mais ils ne se ressemblent pas."

So remarked the old French in their adage: and hence a fruitful source of melancholy; for, as the poet says,—

> "That what we have we prize not to the worth
> Whiles we enjoy it; but, being lack'd and lost,
> Why, then we rack the value, then we find
> The virtue that possession would not show us
> Whiles it was ours."

How often do we hear repeated the mournful complaint of Statius, exclaiming, "All is gone!"

> ——— "Nobis meminisse relictum‡;"

or that of the holy man himself, saying, "My brethren have passed by me as the torrent that passeth swiftly in the valleys§." Villon seems to mourn even for historic friends; and an historian expresses wonder to hear such strains from a joyous child of Paris:—

> "Dites-moi en quel pays
> Est Flora, la belle Romaine?
> Où est la très-sage Héloïs?

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* iv. 93.

† Sum. de Arte Præd. xi.

‡ Sylv. i.

§ Job vi.

La reine Blanche, comme un lis,
Qui chantoit à voix de Sirène ?
. . . . Et Jeanne, la bonne Lorraine
Qu' Anglais brûlerent à Rouen ?
Où sont-ils, Vierge souveraine ?
—— Où sont les neiges de l'autre an ?"

Catholicism sweetens such thoughts, and adds words of joy and hope to their expression :—

"Fuere quondam hæc sed fuere ;
Nunc ubi sint rogitas ? Id annos
Scire hos oportet scilicet. O bonæ
Musæ, O lepores, O charites meræ !
O gaudia offuscata nullis
Litibus ! O sine nube soles * !"

Without faith, some have the strength to say, when left with only memories, "We live in our own world ; and mine is made from glorious phantasies of hope departed." But others, succumbing to the heavy, oppressive despair which gives up every thing, will choose Satan's remedy, and say,—

"I would be at the worst ; worst is my port,
My harbour, and my ultimate repose ;
The end I would attain, my final good."

In our age, the fiend seems to speak in French, saying to each disciple, with reference to his desire of returning, "Il est trop tard." It is too late to think of these things, too late to be converted, too late to hope. Death and destruction are then pronounced to be his refuge. He says,—

"I'll join with black despair against my soul,
And to myself become an enemy."

It is remarkable that Goethe seems to sympathize with men who commit suicide, expressly, indeed, admitting that there are rare circumstances which justify it ; while Montesquieu grants his great men the unrestricted right of killing themselves as they think fit. Yet, in the Catholic view of suicide, even the old heathen wisdom would have acquiesced. "If Cebes," says Socrates, shortly before his death, "be a philosopher, he, and every one else deserving of the name, would be glad to follow me, though without attempting to take away his life ; for they say that such an act is not permitted." To whom Cebes answers, "True, I have often heard Philolaus and many others say that suicide was unlawful." "Yes, that we cannot quit this life by our own act, without impiety, is true," replies Socrates †

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* Donza, cited by Southey.

† Phædo.

"Those who kill themselves," adds Plato, "shall be buried without honour, in a lonely desert place apart, on the frontiers of the territory; and no column shall be erected over them, nor shall their names be inscribed on marble*."

The poet seems to suggest one reason which dictates such a law when saying, "The best man always hopes; to despair is of the base:"—

Οὗτος δ' ἀνὴρ ἄριστος ὅστις ἐλπίσι
Πέπονθεν ἀεί· τὸ δ' ἀπορεῖν ἀνδρὸς κακοῦ †.

The Catholic Church,-while condemning an act which "philosophy" in modern times has often sought to invest with dignity, supplies an efficacious remedy for the madness which suggests it, both by the general tenor of her instruction, which makes war against discouragement, and by her positive institutions, which especially minister to the sufferings of all diseased, afflicted minds. She traces the project of self-destruction to the evil will of Judas, saying, with St. Bruno, "that God would not have permitted him to come to that excess of blindness that he should kill himself, nisi mala voluntas dominicæ proditionis hujus interfectionis causa præcederet ‡." Catholicism can penetrate with all its balmy influences into man's deep and searchless heart,—

"And cast a light on those dim labyrinths where
Hope, near imagined charms, is struggling with despair."

The Catholic mind in general, confident in the privileges attainable from on high, dismisses the melancholy suggestions of a spirit bordering on such self-created madness, with a playful reproof;—

"For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite
The man that mocks at it, and sets it light.

"Cent livres de melancholie," says the adage of the thirteenth century, "ne payent pas un sol de dettes;" and the same popular appreciation of an evil, so easily overcome by faith, was also expressed in the quaint cheerful lines of foresters, when they say,—

"En espérance d'avoir mieulx
Vit le loup tant qu'il devient vieux."

As for the overt act, during many ages it seemed to admit of no other explanation but real inanity, or the depravity of a most abandoned heart. To this day we are assured by English travellers, that "no greater insult can be offered to a Spaniard than

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* De Legibus, lib. ix.

† Herc. Fur. 105.

‡ S. Brun. in Ps. cviii.

to tax him with an intention of committing suicide." Catholic patience prescribes self-preservation under every change of fortune, as when Don Fernando, Calderon's constant prince, yields himself prisoner to the Moorish king, saying, "To refuse would be an act of blameable despair." Don Pedro Messie, of Seville, relates a wild legend, which, under perhaps a fanciful form, contains no less a faithful representation of the efficacy of faith, in supplying by its institutions and manners a remedy for this disease of minds. But, while hearing it, we ought not to adopt the practice of those inferior animals that gnaw the bark of every tree and shrub and twig they pass by, without seeking any other profit than to gratify the instinct which nature, in a sort of caprice, seems to have imparted to them. In all such narratives it is with the substance and its medicinal properties that we are concerned. "In Styria," he says, "there was a gentleman who took a diabolic fancy that he must hang himself, and was in danger of doing it. Aided by his good angel, he disclosed his idea to a monk, who advised him to have a priest always in his company, and to hear mass daily. By his advice, also, he retired to a castle which he possessed in the country, and there he lived a whole year free from the diabolic temptation. At last the priest asked leave to go to a place in the neighbourhood, for the purpose of assisting another priest at a solemn office, and the gentleman consented, intending to follow and hear that mass; but, being delayed on the road, he found he should arrive too late, and presently the old temptation returned; and so, as he rode on disconsolate, he met a peasant who came from the very place he was going to, after hearing mass; and, on the gentleman expressing his vexation to the peasant, the latter said profanely, not to be vexed, and that he would sell him the merit of having heard the mass; to which the knight, it is said, consented, giving him a robe which he wore; then proceeding, he said his prayers devoutly in the church, and mounted his horse to return home. Shortly after passing the spot where he had met the peasant, he found that man hanged from a tree; and thenceforth the gentleman lived always free from the temptation *." Apart from all reference to mystic consolation, one may remark, that it is not without great truth, and a profound knowledge of the human mind, that the Catholic Church, in the various offices of the saints, speaks of being gladdened, rejoiced with all her children at each yearly commemoration; for, as nearly every day is the anniversary of some martyr, or confessor, or virgin, those who seek consolation at her altars are never left to feed upon their own hearts, like men absorbed in the melancholy contemplation of themselves, but are actually each morning refreshed and made glad by having

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* Les Diverses Leçons, id. iii. c. 22.

a glorious theme presented to their thoughts. Historians themselves have occasion to remark instances of men throwing themselves into the sphere of holy practices for the express purpose of removing sadness. A grave example of escape from it, by means of the Catholic institutions, which may be cited to represent countless others of the same kind, occurs in the chronicles of Constance, when we read that, in the year 1058, Adalberus of Rheinfeld, brother of the emperor Rudolph, "tædio rerum humanarum, became a monk at St. Gall *."

This is an avenue which nearly all men must have remarked wandering through the present as the past. Nothing is more familiar than the scenery belonging to it, whether we follow it through the solitudes of the religious or the common walks of life, or to the capital of the Catholic world, whither persons of all descriptions fly, after enduring losses and calamities, and find peace. The empress Agnes, at Rome, in her retreat, disgusted with the world, and consoled by St. Peter Damian, may be pointed out as a representative of them all. To the language of sublime melancholy and of profound weariness, age after age the Catholic voice of consolation replies, in words like those of St. Ephrem, "Consider how this life is full of tears and wickedness, dissipations and negligences, labours, diseases, old age, sin, and death; therefore love it not †." Catholicism teaches men, thus discouraged, to secure what is alone important, alone durable, saying, with the Italian poet, "It is time to return towards a more certain object, and to put an end, at least as far as we are concerned, to those ceaseless complaints." "Omne quod est in mundo est concupiscentia carnis; behold, labour," adds St. Anthony of Padua, "et concupiscentia oculorum, meaning avarice; behold rivalship, and superbia vitæ; behold the hard slavery of the devil. Against these three evils the Lord proposes three remedies—innocence of life against the labour of the flesh; poverty of spirit against the rivalship or traffic of avarice; the effusion of his blood or his passion against the elation of pride ‡;" and by Catholicism alone are these dispensed.

Again, another issue from beneath these boughs is formed, by observing that Catholicism supplies a remedy for the sadness of the imagination, which is a good that not alone poets, but all men, must desire, though the former only may be heard boasting of their disease, as in the Prediction of Gwenchlau,—

> "I sing by night, I sing by day, and nathless I am sad."

Imagination, perhaps the most glorious attribute of man, begets extravagant and unbounded thoughts. "Imagination," says

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* Bucelinus, Chronolog. Constantiensis.

† De Compunctione.

‡ Dom. xvii. post Trinit.

Butler, "is altogether as much a source of discontent as any thing in our external condition." Its regulation is supposed by him to involve qualities destined for exercise in the eternal life, for he adds, "It is indeed true that there can be no scope for patience, when sorrow shall be no more; but there may be need of a temper of mind which shall have been formed by patience*." Very mysterious, however, is the sadness which accompanies the imagination even in its pleasures, and in their legitimate use. A sense of beauty, a sentiment of affection which seems to waste its sweetness in solitude, love, memory, keen desire of joy, all are somewhat allied with regrets. As Don Fernando says, in Calderon's Siege of Alpujarra, "Melancholy and music have been always friends." Melancholy enters into the whole domain of those arts with which genius is most occupied. Frederick Schlegel remarks the strong inclination to the mournful and pathetic which characterizes the works of the old painters. Vasari observes how Tommaso Giottino was of a melancholy temperament and a lover of solitude. They all seem to love representing sorrow. The least thing seems to awaken this chord in their mind. And in fact, without possessing any claim to admission among such students of nature, who does not sympathise with them there? What an effect, to suggest but a trivial instance, has an inscription discovered on some green time-worn stone, half concealed by ivy, on a ruined wall! "Ah, me!" cries the spectator, while bending back the leaves which have grown over it, "how changed is he now who placed it there!" But, in the abuse of imagination, the evil becomes most prolific and difficult to cure. How often do we meet the self-tormented mourner searching for some roots of bitter rumination, vainly, idly thinking, *ὁρόων ἐπὶ οἴνοπα πόντον* †; of whom the poet says,—

Βῆ δ' ἀκέων παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης ‡.

Addressing, perhaps, to some companion the question which our Catholic poet proposes to excite laughter,—"Boy, what sign is it, when a man of great spirit grows melancholy?" Thus are poets of a modern school, and men without faith, by a certain hypochondriacal madness, found to take this road equally with men who have real cause for sadness, each making a most fond parade of melancholy, and saying to every one he meets, "I am wrapped in dismal thinkings."

"To griefs congenial prone,
More wounds than nature gave he knew;
While misery's form his fancy drew,
In dark ideal hues and horrors not its own."

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* Analogy, lib. i. 5.

† Il. i.

‡ Id.

The sun of Catholicism dispels the factitious gloom. And accordingly, as Count Molé lately remarked, in a discourse before the French Academy, "this family of minds diseased, so fertile in the eighteenth and present century, has left few traces in earlier Christian times. They belong," he added, "believe me, to soft generations, to an enervated civilization, when man, absorbed in himself, and pitying his own destiny, isolates himself from his fellow-creatures, and concentrates all his existence in a sterile and plaintive pride." "The beauties of English literature," says a great foreign critic, "are accompanied by an earnest melancholy, which it communicates to all who are occupied with it. Many of these poets when young led a loose and riotous life, and soon found themselves justified in complaining of the vanity of earthly things. On the average, they only show us a gloomy weariness of existence. I do not doubt that cheerful works can be opposed to what I have said, but the greatest number, and the best of these, certainly belong to an older epoch; the newer works are, likewise, of a satirical tendency, bitter, pungent, and characterized also by an especial contempt for women *." The imagination of man, without the food supplied by Catholicity, preys upon itself, and views all things, sooner or later, with a melancholy eye. "Oh, how great a good it would be," says Antonio de Guevara, "if, being Christians, we were amorous of the law of Jesus Christ! Then we should be never pensive." D'Avila says that "all melancholy and despair proceed from a want of fervour in serving God. Men should consider," he says, "that they endure greater pain from these evils than they would have suffered from combating and uprooting the passions which prevent them from serving God with fervour†." The rule of St. Isidore would have no one melancholy, —"Nulla tristitia, nullo temporali mærore afficiatur," it says, "sed contra omnia adversa interiori gaudio fretus," &c.‡ Equally on the future and on the past Catholicism enables men to cast a cheerful look. It speaks in the lines,—

"Peace, brother! be not over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils;
For, grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?"

It speaks no less audibly in the counsels addressed by genius, which may ignore the influence which at the moment shines upon itself. It says, in the words of a great English author, to those who, through despondency at the rapid flight of years, might think it well to join the votaries of sable-coloured melancholy:

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* Chateaubriand.
† Œuvres Spirit.
‡ Reg. S. Isid. c. 3.

"You may see many things yet to make you happy. For you will not close the doors too early in the evening of existence against the visits of renovating and cheerful thoughts, which keep our lives long up, and help them to sink at last without pain or pressure. What a privilege is it, how incomparably greater than any other that genius can confer, to be able to divert the backward flight of fancy and imagination to the recesses they most delighted in! to be able, as the shadows lengthen in our path, to call up before us the youth of our sympathies in all their kindness and purity *." As for the morbid melancholy of the imagination that seeks to feed itself on objects frivolous or base, Catholicism rejects it with contempt and indignation. So, writing to his niece, the noble friar Antonio de Guevara says, half mirthful and half incensed, "Eve wept for her son Abel, Jacob for Joseph, David for Absalom, Jeremiah for Jerusalem, the Magdalen for her sins, St. Peter for his denial of Christ, and you, madam, weep for the death of a little dog †!"

Again, for the sadness of the intelligence, often kindly but imperfectly concealed, as well as for that of the imagination, sound or diseased, Catholicism no less supplies a remedy. This is a theme too vast for attempting any thing like a discussion of it here. Let all who read the Cosmos study it. It must suffice to observe that truth and certainty, in relation to God and to the soul, being the food of minds, so that, when these are withheld, the human understanding, however buoyed up at times with the enthusiasm which genius draws from scientific truth, cannot avoid sinking sooner or later into despondency, the faith of the Catholic church, which yields both religious truth and certainty, by presenting the required sustenance, manifests its origin and its divine adaptation to our nature. "Doubt," as Thiener says, "throwing uncertainty into the mind respecting what ought to be known best, deposits there a germ of sadness which time only ripens. No principle is more fruitful in melancholy than doubt and incredulity. How can the heart have joy when it is condemned to a perpetual fluctuation and ceaseless hesitation?" The revival of melancholy, not the revival of learning, and the Reformation, would be a combination of terms fully justified by historical facts. "Melancholy! say you?" exclaims a Catholic, represented by a poet who lived at the moment of that catastrophe; "what is melancholy?" To whom a stranger replies, "It is a kind of malady that was not known, and that did not exist two years ago. It has sprung up suddenly, and I know not how. It has spread by degrees from one to another, and now every one seems to have caught it. One sees no person now on any side who is not melancholy." Henricus Stromerus, the physician

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* Landor.

† Lib. i.

and friend of Erasmus, used to say, "I have practised as a physician during more than forty years, and I have found more persons to die of sadness and melancholy than by a violent death *."

We find that all the deliberate advocates of Protestantism have been subject to this disease, which overtakes them often at the moment of their success, as when Luther beheld the triumph of his reform secured, and betrayed a deep despondency and gloom. A recent instance occurs in the journal of a traveller who had been deputed to propagate the same doctrine in Spain; for after relating the results of his mission, which seemed to him highly favourable, he proceeds to mention that a profound melancholy took possession of him, which entirely disqualified him for active exertions; so that, change of scene and air being recommended, he relinquished his commission and returned to England. The more general infidelity, which, as we have lately seen, so often follows in the wake of the fatal ship that introduces heresy, produces the same effect. The man is not cheerful, whatever he may wish to seem, when faith, with all its vivifying influences on the mind and heart, withdraws,

"And reason in her lonesome palace reigns."

Such victims of an incomplete divided intelligence are unable to conceal this truth. It is his own condition that the poet no doubt paints in the sad lines so fearfully expressive:—

"Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again
With nought of hope left, but with less of gloom;
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made despair a smilingness assume."

Change of scene and air afford no effectual remedy for this state of mind, though the physician of the biblical traveller in Spain recommended it wisely to his patient,—

"In culpa est animus, qui se non effugit unquam †."

The weight will still be there, ready to prompt the old Homeric lamentation—

'Αλλ' ἧμαι παρὰ νηυσὶν, ἐτώσιον ἄχθος ἀρούρης ‡.

It is only by removing doubt and uncertainty with regard to the soul, and all great spiritual interests, that an exemption can be obtained from this burden which oppresses the human intelli-

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* Richebourcq, Ultima Verba, &c.

† 1 Ep. xiv. 13.

‡ xviii. 104.

gence; and accordingly we find that some, as if instinctively, will direct their feet to the issue, exclaiming, with a celebrated English sceptic, "O, sir, I do now feel myself inwrapped on the sudden into those mazes and labyrinths of dreadful and hideous thoughts, that which way to get out, or which way to end, I know not, unless I turn mine eyes and lift up my hands to that eternal and propitious throne, where nothing is readier than grace and refuge to the distress of mortal suppliants; and it were a shame to leave these serious thoughts less piously than the heathens were wont to conclude their graver discourses." "Pietas ad omnia utilis est." What more useful than the faith which expels melancholy from the understanding? which prevents religion itself from becoming a source of melancholy, as when men are left to their own musings on that book of predestination in which, as St. Thomas of Villanova says, "no mortal, but only angels, can read." "Are men sad?" then replies Plato. "To be exempt from sadness is for them the supreme good. It is not joy which they regard as the most delightful, but the cessation of sadness, and the attainment of mental rest, in the same manner as the greatest good for the sick is health *." Considering from the report of others, or from the result of their own study, that Catholicism confers then what they most desire, some men will naturally feel inclined to try at last the true remedy; and so from the gloom and misery of nature, from the melancholy of the imagination and of the intelligence, they will escape to the sun-like cheerfulness of the gracious fold, verifying in their altered, as well as in their former condition, the truth of what St. Jerome says, that "nothing is more miserable than man according to nature, and nothing happier than man enlightened by the Christian faith."

But now we come to another great opening in the forest; for men find upon this road an avenue to Catholicity, by discovering that it supplies a remedy for the sadness of sin—for the melancholy which is so often alternately the cause and consequence of disobedience to the law of God.

Zeno and the Stoics named sadness among the accessories of vice, and Chrysippus said that melancholy was one of the causes of losing virtue. Whatever withdraws us from obeying the moral laws of the Catholic religion necessarily draws us on to deeper and deeper gloom. "Men think and endeavour," says Henry Suso, "to escape the cross of Christ, and lo, they fall amongst precipices, and from refusing to bear his sweet yoke they are oppressed with heavier burdens †." "There is also another cross," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "not of the Lord, but of the devil, to which the children of this world are daily at-

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* De Repub. lib. ix.

† Dialog. 6.

tached—a laborious cross, a bitter cross, an intolerable cross, cross of the wicked thief; for the devil has his martyrs, who can say to him, Quoniam propter te mortificamur tota die. Is not the avaricious man a martyr, day and night anxious? Is not the proud man a martyr, who is crucified by the least slight or neglect? Is not the libertine a martyr? What do not such men endure*!" "You have pleased yourself and displeased God. Therefore," says St. Anthony of Padua, "the days will come when you will be displeasing to yourself; so take heed before the days of darkness come upon you†." "My sins," says Savonarola, "are my greatest sorrow. Take away my sins, and I am free from all tribulation: for all sadness proceeds from love. If I love a son and he dies, I am sad, for I have lost what I loved. Take away these my sins, and what remains but that I should love thee, O God, with my whole heart, and so never be confounded‡." All flesh is as grass, and its beauty as the flowers of the field. Take away its corrupt love, and receive into your soul its pure love, loving it as formed by Him who never passes, and the sense of beauty will no longer entail melancholy, but remain with you associated with joy for ever. The songster of vain love is prepared for subscribing to this appreciation of that which sets the hearts of men on fire. "O how little honey," he exclaims, "and what abundance of aloes it has made me taste! In what bitterness has it plunged my life, with its false sweetness, which draws me amidst the amorous cohort! for unless I deceive myself I was disposed to rise above the earth, and it has snatched me from the bosom of peace to endure unceasing war." "Væ peccatori qui duabus viis graditur," says Solomon. "He who often changes the road," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "passing from one way to another, takes in fact no road. How often does the devil seduce hastening travellers to leave the right road and choose another§!" Then the path of gloom and shadows is conversant with such echoes as the poet catches and inspires, saying in the person of another,—

"Nor am I in the list of them that hope;
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless.
My hopes all flat; nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself;
My race of glory run, and race of shame,
And I shall shortly be with them that rest."

Such is the sinful penance self-imposed by sinners, of which St. Gregory, citing the instance of Judas, says, "Pejus pœnituit

* De Uno Mart. serm. iv.
† S. Ant. Pad. Dom. x. post Trin. Serm.
‡ Savon. in Ps. In te, Domine, speravi.
§ De S. Adelesmo Serm.

quam peccavit." From this state men will be drawn to recognise the divine truth of Catholicity in the contrary penance which turns despair itself to the earnest of supreme good; for, as Antonio exclaims,—

> ———— "O out of that no hope
> What great hope have you! No hope, that way, is
> Another way so high an hope, that even
> Ambition cannot pierce a wink beyond."

"Note," says St. Bonaventura, "that sadness is a twofold evil; for sometimes it is called generally sadness, as being connected with all passions; for in every passion one finds sadness or delight, according to the object obtained or lost; and you will overcome this sadness in proportion as you extirpate sins—if much, much; if little, little; if all, wholly; but who can do this? There is another sadness which more immediately attaches itself to things divine, and may be called acedia. It is difficult to discover the origin of sadness, because it has so many origins; as it belongs to all vices and affections. Against the twofold sadness, then, nought prevails but the charity of God, which prompts to constant activity. Of great use against sadness is devout conversation in good society; the memory of the benignity and mercy of God; and also a devout song*." Moved by such considerations some will turn from the evil path to follow the gracious avenue to the Catholic Church which they see before them; by the confessional they will kneel them down; and finding once more on issuing from it that joy of their innocent boyhood which they never thought to experience again, they will thenceforth learn that peace is the fruit of the manners of Catholicism, and a cheerful heart its victory. In fine, there is an avenue to the Catholic Church opening from this road, by considering how her divine faith supplies a remedy for the sadness of virtue, which without it succumbs in spite of all that philosophy can boast, to the melancholy and misery of man. "Une grande âme," says Chateaubriand, "doit contenir plus de douleurs qu' une petite." Cicero, writing to Dolabella, shows that it costs him dear to acknowledge the insufficiency of philosophy to administer the consolation that he needs; but he does acknowledge it, saying, "Non quod ita sim fractus, ut aut hominem me esse oblitus sim; aut fortunæ succumbendum putem; sed tamen hilaritas illa nostra et suavitas, quæ te præter cæteros delectabat, erepta mihi omnis est†." Alas! virtue, in all ages and under all circumstances, has experience of these tears, in which all is sublime, but in which all is likewise bitterness.

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* S. Bonavent. de Pugna Spirituali, c. 7.

† Ep. ix. 11.

The saints can claim no exemption. We hear, even from their lips, such words as, "I have inly wept, or should have spoke ere this." The saints say commonly, that when any one sees evil, and grieves for it, and would correct it if he had the power, then, cæteris paribus, he has more merit than if it had been corrected. "The reason is," says an old author, "because the pious mind suffers in consequence the more*." This merit, in most rich abundance, belongs to the men whom the holy Church canonizes. St. Edmond, when at Pontigny, used to exclaim, "Oh, how much better would it be to die, than to see the evils of my nation, and the evils of the saints, upon earth†!" The saints mourn, as our Lord mourned, from meditating on the evils and calamities of men. "Follow with me," says Don Juan Donoso Cortez, "the steps of the Saviour from the manger to the cross. What signifies this cloud of sadness which perpetually covers his sacred countenance? The people of Galilee have seen him weep; the family of Lazarus has seen him weep; his disciples have seen him weep; Jerusalem has seen him bathed in tears; all, all have seen tears in his eyes. Who has seen laughter on his lips? And what saw these bedewed eyes, before which appeared all things past, present, and to come? Did they see the human race navigating on a calm and happy sea? No, no; they saw Jerusalem falling on God; the Romans falling on Jerusalem; the barbarians falling on the Romans; Protestantism falling on the Church; revolution, nourished by Protestantism, falling on society; the Socialists falling on civilization; and the terrible God, the God of justice, falling upon all. That is what they saw, and that is why the eyes of the Saviour, till the moment when they closed, had tears. Lo! why his soul was sorrowful, even unto death!" Pliny speaks of a tree, the fruit of which pleases solely from its bitterness‡. Such is ofttimes the food of sanctity. Yes, such is the food even prepared expressly for it on days appointed to be kept with joy and gladness. "Car je ne sais pourquois," says a spiritual writer, "Dieu choisit les jours des fêtes les plus solennelles pour éprouver davantage et purifier ceux qui sont à lui. Ce n'est que là-haut, dans la fête du ciel que nous serons délivrés de toutes nos peines§."

"Hail divinest melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view,
O'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue."

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* De Regimine Rusticorum, 77.

† Mat. Paris, ad ann. 1240.

‡ N. H. lib. xii. 14.

§ S. Cyran. Mém. de Lancelot, i. 64.

"Memor esto gemitus quos perpessi sunt sancti," says St. Pachomius*. And again he says, "Hyems præsentis seculi nos ambulare non prohibeat†." This is the winter of their life, and sadness may become them; for,—

"How many things by season season'd are
To their right praise and true perfection!"

"Sadness," says Savonarola, "besieges me with a great army day and night. Whatever I see or hear bears the standard of sadness. The memory of my friends saddens me; the consideration of the cloister and of the cell presses me; the meditation of my studies afflicts me; the thought of my sins sinks me down; and, as in a fever, even the sweetest things taste bitter in my mouth‡." "But can you," as Conrade asks, "make no use of your discontent?" Therein lies the secret; there is the distinction which it behoves every man to make. All this sadness for the Catholic is medicinal. "God acts with me," says Marina de Escobar, "as a wise physician with a weak and delicate patient, to whom he gives medicine, so artfully prepared as to quantity and exterior appearance, that whoever, being in health, should see it, would say that it could easily be taken; and yet the sick person finds that it is very troublesome, and that it does not leave a part of the body without altering and disturbing it, either on account of its diseased state, or of the skill which knew how to effect much by a small quantity. Thus God sends me an affliction which might seem trifling to another person, and easily borne; and yet, felt in my mind by the disposition of his infinite wisdom, it is much; and, as the sick man recovers by means of the medicine, so does experience show that it was good for me to be so afflicted§." Elsewhere, she says on one occasion, "I beheld a long procession of penitents and afflicted persons, who walked two by two, all sorrowful; some loaded with crosses, others with chains and bonds, and others without any signs of suffering, appearing less afflicted; while angels walked amongst them, saying, 'Further, further.' I saw myself among those who had no exterior signs of suffering, and, being anxious to suffer for God, I cried, 'Unhappy that I am! how little is it that I suffer!' but the Lord answered, 'You err; for some seem externally to suffer little, and, in point of fact, they suffer much—partly on account of the constitution of their bodies and their natural complexion, and partly, because I so ordain it, that what is little should afflict much‖.'" Again, she

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* Monita S. Pachomii, ap. Luc. Holst. Cod. Reg.
† Epist. S. Pach. iii.
‡ Savon. in Ps. In te, Dom., speravi.
§ Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ, i. c. 6. ‖ Id. i. c. 6.

says, "One day, being oppressed with grief and pain, the blessed Virgin appeared to me, and asked me, saying, 'Sister, why so afflicted?' 'It is my heart that seems to bleed,' I replied. 'Ah, yes,' she replied, 'it is the sword of grief that pierces it.' 'But, my lady,' I replied, 'if I have in my heart my Lord, as I was told I should, and that Jesus should dwell in my heart, how can there be a sword which pierces it?' 'It is, however, so, sister,' answered the blessed Virgin; 'there is no contradiction; for, where Jesus dwells, there must be the cross. My son had it all the time when he lived in the world, and I, similarly, from the moment of his birth. I never wanted it: and, moreover, such a cross, that you cannot conceive its weight*.'" But she relates a vision still more remarkable, which sets before us, in a beautiful manner, the melancholy of the good, and the mysterious aid which enables them to overcome it. "One morning," she says, "I beheld many angels bearing golden crosses with great solemnity and joy; and they bore them to earth. And the first angel fixed his cross in a certain foreign Catholic land, and walked about seeking some who would embrace and adore it; and, finding no one, he carried it back to heaven. The second angel fixed his cross also in another Catholic land, and then went to seek for those who would adore it. He met, walking in the fields, a certain poor rustic, who seemed a hermit, walking as if searching for something. 'Servant of God, whither goest thou?' asked the angel. 'I seek,' replied the hermit, 'that hidden treasure which the man, finding in his field, sold all that he had and bought it.' 'Come with me,' said the angel, 'and I will show you this treasure;' and he led him to the cross, and said, 'Lo, there is the treasure which enriches the soul, and leads it to eternal life; for he who finds it finds his supreme good.' Then the hermit, prostrate, adored the cross. The angel placed it on his shoulders, assisted him to bear it, and so it was carried to his poor hut, where the angel said, 'Now I will remain here with you to the end of your life, and I will never cease helping you to carry that cross.' Then I saw the third angel, who also fixed his cross in the ground; and a certain pious, poor woman, who was walking in the field very anxiously, and weary, with expanded arms, seeking something, embraced it. 'Servant of God,' said the angel to her, 'what seekest thou?' 'I seek,' she replied, 'the royal way to beatitude—the plain and secure way to find my God.' To whom the angel said, 'Behold that cross! that is the royal way to beatitude, the plain, safe way to heaven, on which no one perishes.' The woman adored and embraced the cross. The angel placed it on her shoulders, and helped her to bear it to her poor house, which seemed like a hovel; and

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* P. i. lib. i. c. 27.

then he said, 'Here will I remain with you all the days of your life on earth, and I will assist you to bear it.' The fourth angel fixed his cross in another region, and then walked about till he met a certain nobleman walking in the field, very thoughtful, as if he searched for something; and the angel said, 'Noble, servant of God, what seekest thou?' The nobleman answered, 'I seek the treasure of the soul—I seek peace and security.' 'Oh, what a good you seek for!' replied the angel. 'Come with me, I will show you all at once;' and, showing him the cross, he said, 'There is the true treasure of the soul, comprising all good; he who embraces, and loves, and wishes it, possesses true peace, and finds true security. All who embrace that cross reign with God in heaven; and no where else is any thing secure.' The noble prostrated himself, and adored the cross, and took it for his spouse; and the angel placed it on his shoulders, and helped him to carry it to his house, and said, on arriving there, 'I will remain hereafter always with you*.'" Thus for virtue and innocence itself do the acceptance and adoration of the mysterious cross, formed by desire, want, melancholy, and a nervous sense of constant danger, constitute the titles of sanctity. Thus does goodness in the world mourn. On Easter Monday, at vespers, the Church, as if to establish the fact, and prepare men at all times for witnessing it, sings the words of our Lord, "Qui sunt hi sermones, quos confertis ad invicem ambulantes, et estis tristes?" The saints know sadness under the name of dereliction. Jesus, they think, is going away. "I knew a Dominican," says Henry Suso, "who, in the first year of his conversion, was oppressed with melancholy to such a degree, that when he sat in his cell he could neither study, nor pray, nor do any thing. While thus stript of all spiritual gifts, lo! he heard a voice, saying, 'Why sittest thou here? Rise, and recall to mind what I have suffered.' He heard it as from heaven, rose, began to meditate on the passion of Christ, and for ever afterwards was delivered from sadness†." So also we read, that, when tempted with the spirit of sadness, brother Rufinus was delivered from it by the counsels of St. Francis, and, in fine, ineffably consoled by a vision of our Saviour, who told him, in proof of the reality of his coming to him, that never afterwards, during his whole life, would he feel sadness again; which promise the issue verified‡.

Here, then, we are invited, by an easy transition, to consider how the sadness of virtue is removed or qualified by Catholicity, and how the weight that hung upon our thoughts is lightened by the aid of that clear spirit which brings to all who accept it

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* P. i. lib. iii. c. 18.

† Dialog. c. 14.

‡ Mag. Speculum, 641.

comfort and renovation. Indeed, while observing how the virtuous mourn, we have already seen how they have been consoled by the Catholic doctrine, which alone can justly prescribe continual cheerfulness, as it alone supplies the means to obtain it. "Let no one appear melancholy or cloudy," says St. Francis, commanding only what was practicable to his friars, "but always joyful and full of grace [*]." Some, like St. Peter of Alcantara, would expressly employ themselves in applying the spiritual remedy. Whenever he observed a monk sad, he used to persuade him to explain the cause; and he never left him till he was consoled [†]. Others, like the abbot Trithemius, prescribe certain devotions as peculiarly appropriate to the condition of persons suffering from such temptations. "I have known many persons of all conditions," he says, "delivered from pernicious melancholy by invoking St. Anne, the pious mother of our blessed Lady [‡]." His beautiful prayers to St. Anne are composed with an especial view to deliverance from this disease of minds. But it is needless to remain longer at a point where no one who opens his eyes can long need direction, since Catholicism in its faith and in its mysteries, in its institutions and in its manners, can be easily recognised, by every one who passes, as the centre from which those who wander on the road of sadness can derive the inestimable advantage of a serene, cheerful, and even joyous temper of mind. The evils that afflict them may be more or less grievous, some rushing upon them with impetuous violence, others gliding almost imperceptibly into their imagination; but it is evident that, where that mind has been once created by faith and filled with the profound thoughts that it inspires, they all end like rivers or streamlets, formed some by fountains, others by torrents, which at last fall into the same deep unruffled lake and are still. Thus does the evil road of melancholy lead by successive avenues, through each of which the Catholic Church can be in view, to the sun-clad domains which proclaim the brightness and calm joyfulness of truth.

[*] Spec. Vit. S. F. cap. 7.

[†] Marchèse, Vie de S. P. d'Alcant. i. 16.

[‡] De Laud. S. Annæ.

CHAPTER X.

THE ROAD OF MISFORTUNE.

SLOWLY passing thus through the wintry forest of our life, by the road of sadness, long now accustomed to meet those who are grown melancholy, we come to the last turning, which will lead us to more smiling scenes in a region of the forest not yet explored, and more appropriate to our advance towards the completion of this whole journey. The trees of the forest seem to proclaim that they, like men, are subject not alone to droop and fade without a sufficient cause appearing, but also to endure misfortunes while possessing all their strength of resistance, to encounter accidents which nothing can avert, and to suffer most when they seemed to enjoy the greatest security,—

> ——— "mortalibus ægris
> Arboribusque pares fert vita simillima casus *."

Chateaubriand remarks an instance. "On my road," he says, "between the Rhine and the mountains of Tonnerre, I saw a melancholy thing—a wood of young pines, of five or six feet high, cut down and laid up in faggots—a forest laid low in youth." Alanus de Insulis traces the same analogy :—

> "Hic nemus ambiguum, diversaque nascitur arbor.
> Ista manet sterilis, hæc fructum parturit ; illa
> Fronde nova gaudet, hæc frondibus orphana plorat.
> Una viret, plures arescunt, unaque floret,
> Efflorent aliæ ; quædam consurgit in altum,
> Demittuntur humi reliquæ ; dum pullulat una,
> Marcescunt aliæ, varius sic alterat illas
> Casus, et in varias alternat motibus omnes.
> Marcescit laurus, myrtus parit, aret oliva,
> Fit fecunda salix, sterilis pyrus, orphana fructu
> Pomus, et in partu contendit vitibus ulmus.
> Hìc rarò philomela canit, cytharizat alauda ;
> Crebrius hìc miseros eventus bubo prophetat †."

The tree stripped of its leaves in early summer by the caterpillar ; the tree half uprooted and broken, when the rude blast makes flexible the knees of knotted oaks ; the tree stripped of its branches by the axe, robbed of its bark to enrich the trader,

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[*] Varierii Præd. Rust. lib. vi.

[†] Encyclopædia, lib. vii. c. 8.

disfigured and degraded by the hand of wanton mischief, conveys not an unfitting emblem of the vicissitudes and calamities of man, liable to be cut off in a moment, or to see his children cut down by his side, to be robbed of his substance, or injured by some malicious and unprovoked enemy, while striving in his little world to outscorn the to-and-fro conflicting wind and rain of the ordinary lot appointed to his nature. Vicissitudes, whether affecting trees or men, are instructive. There is a lively pleasure in witnessing a storm in the forest, when black clouds are rapidly chasing each other over the face of heaven. Pliny says that tempests can be foreseen by observing the crows returning later than usual from foraging*. Virgil maintains that they never come on without previous indications; but in sultry weather their approach is often as quick as it is unexpected. A short interval is sufficient to bring over us the

——— "thunder from crag to crag,
Mixed with the clash of the lashing rain
Hurried on by the might of the hurricane."

During a storm in summer, Chateaubriand says he used to mount to the top of the great west tower of Combourg. "The rolling of the thunder," he says, "under the vaults of the castle, the torrents of rain which fell rattling on the pyramidical tops of the towers, excited my enthusiasm." The poet feels the same pleasure at such moments among the chesnut-trees of this very forest:—

"Next away to the heights where the chesnuts are waving,
On Montaigu's side there are blue bells so rare,
Their tall azure spires are well worth the having,
And though rain fall in torrents, 'tis sweet to be there †."

The sudden mutability of fortune seems familiar to the forest at such times. The trees too are often spectators of a distant disturbance:—

"For when the irresistible storm had cloven
That fearful darkness, the blue sky was seen
Fretted with many a fair cloud interwoven
Most delicately, and the river green
Beneath that opening spot of blue serene
Quiver'd like burning emerald; calm was spread
On all below; but far on high, between
Earth and the upper air, the vast clouds fled,
Countless and swift as leaves on autumn's tempest shed.

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* N. H. xviii. 87.

† Cayley Shadwell.

For, ever as the war became more fierce
Between the whirlwinds and the rack on high,
That spot grew more serene ; blue light did pierce
The woof of those white clouds which seemed to lie
Far, deep and motionless, while through the sky
The pallid semicircle of the moon
Pass'd on in slow and moving majesty."

Pierre Mathieu, the grave French historian, compares the events of human life to such forest scenes. " This fortune," he says, on one occasion, " was like the sun, which in the morning appeared so bright that the pilgrim thought to make the longest and best day of his journey, but, being obscured by clouds towards midday, stops him short, and makes him repent of his undertaking :"—

" But hark ! Is it the music of the pines ?
Is it the lake ? Is it the waterfall ?
'Tis something sadder, sweeter far than all."

It is the theme which floats over the road of misfortune, recording many an heroic tale of human strange endurance, like broken memories of many a heart woven into one.

" Let us sit on that grey stone
Till our mournful talk be done."

Forests have been often witnesses to the sufferings of the unfortunate, as when the poet says,—

" I find her, straying in the wood,
Seeking to hide herself ; as doth the deer,
That hath received some unrecuring wound."

So the Belvidera of Otway says to Jaffier,—

" Oh ! smile, as when our loves were in their spring !
Oh ! lead me to some desert wide and wild,
Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent, where I may tell aloud
To the high heavens, and every list'ning planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught."

How many persons have mysteriously disappeared in forests—have wandered into woods, and there, meeting with some unforeseen calamity, have never more been heard of. Every one remembers the tale so simply and pathetically told respecting the Signora Laurentini. " It was one evening, about October or November, this good lady walked out of the castle into the woods below, as she had often done before, all alone. The wind blew and strewed the leaves about, and whistled dismally among those great old chesnut-trees ; but still she proceeded ; for she

was fond of walking in the woods at evening time; and if the leaves were falling about her so much the better. So they saw her go down; but night came, and she did not return, and from that day to this she has never been heard of." These caverns, these hollow trees, these oratories for the dead, may recall the memory of real sufferers whose cruel fate has been the theme of old monastic chronicles. In a forest one might have found the ancient mortuary chapel of the innocent and beautiful Genefeva, daughter of the duke of Brabant, and wife of Syffred, Count Palatine, who left her in his castle of Hohen Symern, when he went in arms against the Pagans. Golo being appointed to take charge of the castle and protect her, this wretch sought to betray his master, and in revenge against the innocent, who ever invoked the blessed Virgin, and abhorred his seductions, he, fearing also for his own life if discovery of his guilt were made, contrived to inspire him with jealousy, so that, in fulfilment of orders, he sent her to be drowned along with her child; but the servants to whom she was committed, moved with pity, resolved on not strictly fulfilling their charge, but left her exposed in a forest, where she remained during six years and three months, with a deer, it is said, serving for nurse to her child. She lived on herbs and roots, and had her dwelling composed of branches and turf. At last, on the day of the Epiphany, her husband, the Count Palatine, intending to give a feast, convoked the nobles, and, in order to entertain those who arrived before the day, he appointed a hunting in this forest. The deer flying from the dogs led to the discovery of the woman and child, who, on disclosing her name, was found to be his own wife. Then messengers being sent to Hyldulf, bishop of Treves, that prelate came on the day of the Epiphany, and consecrated the spot in the forest where she had so long prayed to God and invoked the blessed Virgin, and there a chapel was erected in honour of the Trinity and of St. Mary. At the banquet the princess would eat no food but her accustomed roots, and she only lived from the day of her discovery, which was the vigil of the Epiphany, till the 4th of the nones of April, when she died. At her request she was interred in the chapel of the forest. Crowds followed her with tears and lamentations; and an indulgence of forty days was granted, which was afterwards extended to all who came there on every festival of St. Mary, and on the Epiphany, for ever *. But, were we to attend to what foresters record respecting the misfortunes which the trees and caves have witnessed, we should here make too long delay. Yet hear one legend more, which Gabriel Bucelinus relates in his chronology of Constance. "In 1172, St. Idda, Countess of Kirchberg, wife

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* Freherus de Origin. Palatin. ap. Rader. Bavaria Sancta, ii. 307.

of Henry, Count of Dockenburg, a most holy woman, in the diocese of Constance, having had her marriage-ring stolen by a crow, which was found in its nest by a hunter who afterwards wore it, and, being falsely accused on this account, was condemned to be thrown from a window; but, commending her innocence to God, she was uninjured by the fall. So, retiring to a cavern, she began to lead an eremitic life, in which she persevered till at the end of seventeen years she was found by hunters; but, declining to return to her husband, she passed the rest of her days in a cell not far from Fischingen, where a convent was erected. This blessed Idda going by night to the office to the church from her cell, which was at a distance of a thousand paces, it is said a stag used to walk before her with twelve tapers shining amidst its horns *."

While we are wandering through such scenery, it is well to hear these sad events, chanced in the times of old, which once were familiar to every group gathered round the hearth of each of those ancient time-worn habitations that we remark with interest as we pass along. The Roman naturalist, in the seventh book of his forest walks, leaves the trees and plants to descant upon the miseries incident to man. Weeping when born, he says, "a suppliciis vitam auspicatur, unam tantum ob culpam, quia natum est. Heu dementium ab his initiis existimantium ad superbiam se genitos! hominem," he adds, "scire nihil sine doctrina, non fari, non ingredi, non vesci, breviterque non aliud naturæ sponte, quam flere †." As Don Fernando says, in Calderon's Constant Prince, "One day calls another day, and makes tears to follow tears, and sorrow sorrow." These trembling poplars or aspens, timid daughters of the wood, so singular on account of the constant agitation of their pale leaves when other trees are at rest, which wild animals, stags, and in general all kinds of hunted creatures love above every other forest tree, in winter congregating in places where they grow, and feeding on the young slips, may well recall the race that ever suffers, either from calamity or from the fear of some impending catastrophe, saying, with the poet,—

> "Quid quisque vitet, numquam homini satis
> Cautum est, in horas ‡."

These almond-trees, so beautiful with their early flowers blossoming on the bare branches, are regarded by poets as an emblem of the frail hope which is all that remains to men in the calamities of a hard, forsaken life:—

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* Id.

† Plin. N. H. lib. vii.

‡ 2 Od. xiii.

> "The hope, in dreams of a happier hour,
> That alights on misery's brow,
> Springs out of the silvery almond-flower,
> That blooms on a leafless bough."

Many are the forms of calamity that have passed here,—

> Πολλαὶ γε πολλοῖς εἰσι συμφοραὶ βροτῶν,
> μορφαὶ δὲ διαφέρουσιν* ;

and let us not fear now the insipidity of common-place declamation, for we shall hear the gravest and most illustrious men speak of them. "Who in this life," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "wants tribulation? However and wherever you live, you will have sorrows; for what are the days of man but a chain of successive evils? If you could see the hearts of the rich and fortunate, you would find that they are sadder than night and blacker than charcoal †." "I doubt not," says St. Bonaventura, "but you have learned by many experiments how transitory and deceitful is the love of this world ‡:"—

> "What stony hart that heaves thy haplesse fate,
> Is not empierst with deepe compassiowne,
> And makes ensample of man's wretched state,
> That floures so fresh at morne, and fades at evening late!"

No age of the world has wanted this experience.

"I have always dreaded," said Paulus Emilius, "the extreme inconstancy and the inexhaustable variety of fortune." Plutarch, writing his life, uses words that express the same conviction; for he says, "Fortune, putting off to another time to satisfy her envy against the consul, allowed him to taste the sweets of his victory without alloy." What says the world to your ear?—

> ——"Dura navis,
> Dura fugæ mala, dura belli § !"

You fear this misfortune and that danger, and think prudently;—

> ——"Sed improvisa lethi
> Vis rapuit, rapietque gentes ||."

Father Heilmann, in Undine, lingered in the forest, sheltering in a hut which he had formed by interweaving the branches of trees, and covering them with moss; and to the question, What he was doing there, since he would not give the marriage bless-

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* Ion, 381.
† De SS. Cosma et Dam. Serm.
‡ Amatorium.
§ 2 Od. xiii.
|| Id.

ing? his answer was, "There are many other blessings besides those given at marriages; and, though I did not come to officiate at the wedding, I may still officiate at a very different solemnity. All things have their seasons; we must be ready for them all. Besides, marrying and mourning are by no means so very unlike, as every one, not wilfully blinded, must know full well." Assuredly no one has need of a page charged to say to him, like the slave of Philip of Macedon, Ἄνθρωπος εἶ. We have all misfortunes enough to make us familiar with the lesson;—

> "For see, on every pärt, wide-stretching space
> Replete with bitter pain and torment ill."

And, as another poet remarks,—

> "When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
> But in battalions."

It has been said, indeed, and happily with truth, that our nature cannot accept more than a certain dose of misfortunes, all that exceeds that dose annihilating it, or not attaining it *; but how much must have been suffered ere it is reduced to such impassibility!

> "Yes, tears to human suffering are due,
> And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
> Are mourn'd by man, and not by man alone."

Pope Innocent III. contemplates life with sentiments which, as Hurter remarks, will voluntarily direct the intelligence to the great truths which are taught by the Catholic Church. "As the sea," he says, "is troubled and full of bitterness, so is our existence upon earth. No where is there peace and security, no where repose and tranquillity; every where we find disquietude and trembling, pains and sorrow—sorrow mixed with vice, and mourning with the flowers of felicity. Life though short is full of miseries; it is worn out in labours, in fears, in the anguish of suffering. This misery is long, for it lasts to the end of life; it is persevering, for not a day is exempt from it. Thus the lot of man on earth is sad, for he is born to trouble; and this fragile body could not endure this infinite sorrow, if a ray of joy did not come to him from time to time; but how many are there who never feel the presentiment of spiritual and eternal joy, and who seek only carnal and temporal pleasures. Unhappy creatures, what are every day our pains, projects, and deeds? We spin spiders' webs; we tear each other; we pass our time in vain desires and in bad actions."

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* Goethe.

Prosperous men, though most exposed to fortune's blows, are provided with no peculiar means for warding them off. The sons of the wood are in this respect more favoured; for they are strengthened when most in danger. Foresters say accordingly "that those parts of forests which lie towards the west, and are in general most fertile, require great precautions: for the trees on the borders, being exposed continually to the wind, are provided from their youth with great lateral roots, which enable them to resist hurricanes, but those trees behind them, which they shelter, not having these supplementary roots, become victims of the first storm, if the sheltering trees are imprudently cut down [*]." Nature has no sheltering foliage for human felicity.

"Oh, my happiness! oh, my joy!" says Calderon de la Barca; "say not whose you are; for by your short duration it is too clear that you are mine [†]." Nor yet, perhaps, did even this happiness, while it lasted, fully satisfy him.

——"Usque adeo nulla est sincera voluptas,
Sollicitumque aliquid lætis intervenit [‡]."

"Where joy most revels, grief does most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye."

Were it otherwise, were the triumph of the prosperous to be ever so complete, the day of suffering, the servile day, the ἦμαρ ἀναγκαῖον [§] is not the less inevitable. The Greeks placed the future behind us and the past before us, in order to show that we are, as it were, walking backwards. Those who feel most secure can never answer for the morrow. "As fortune," says Pierre Mathieu, "had always given to the Duc de Biron prosperity pure, and without mixing with its sweetness any thing bitter; so she gave him now this affliction wholly without leaving him any other hope than in death, which was to be the issue of his captivity as of his life [||]." How soon this mightiness meets misery! These ruins in the forest cresting heights can attest it. How often has sudden and overwhelming calamity befallen the feudal towers! We may call to witness that castle of Montilla, which was so famous as the birth-place of the great captain, one of the strongest and most beautiful habitations in all Andalusia, which was demolished by order of King Ferdinand, to revenge the imprisonment of one of his commissioners, by its young lord, Don Pedro de Cordova, Marquis of Priego, son of the glorious Alonso de Aguilar, who was so near perishing with him in the

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[*] Burgsdorf, Manuel Forestier.

[†] Love after Death.

[‡] Met. vii.

[§] Il. xvi. 835.

[||] Hist. de Hen. IV. lib. v.

fatal slaughter of the Sierra Vermeja. Peter Martyr laments this destruction :—" Montiliana illa atria," he says, " quæ vidisti aliquando, multo auro, multoque ebore compta ornataque, proh dolor! funditus dirui sunt jussa *." The royal and imperial, as well as the feudal greatness, can often supply the same direction in their sudden overthrow.

"Omnia vincebas, sperabas omnia, Cæsar;
Omnia deficiunt, incipis esse nihil †."

No men need the Catholic securities more than monarchs, to whom so often may be addressed the words of Salisbury to Richard II.,—

" Thy sun sets weeping in the lowly west,
Witnessing storms to come, woe, and unrest."

The middle ages, as well as recent times, had great examples of the sudden fall of greatness.

The emperor Charles III. is described by one who knew him personally as a most Christian prince. " He who had at one period attained to such prosperity," says Otho of Frisingen, " came at last to want bread, so that he might say with Job, 'Elevasti me super nubem, et allisisti valde;' for what is the prosperity of the world but a cloud which passes quickly, and deceives him who trusted in it. This vicissitude," continues the historian, " which the philosopher compared to the rotation of a wheel, is intended by God to wean us from the mundane misery, and to inspire us with a love for the true life. Charles was most christian; therefore this temptation at the end of his career must have been sent to prove him. He died the year after his expulsion from the kingdom, and was buried in the monastery of Hirchau ‡." But of the inconstancy of fortune, and the uncertainty of earthly happiness, history has no example, perhaps, more memorable than that of Don Alvar de Luna, constable of Castile, grand master of St. James, possessing, as patrimonial domains, sixty towns or fortresses. When summoned to surrender in the king's name, by the royal herald, Don Juan, he replied, " I submit to what his highness may command, and I will always say to his majesty as I say to God in the holy prayer of the Pater Noster, 'Thy will be done.'" With these words he gave himself up prisoner. Then while Don Diego de Zuñiga was conducting him to Valladolid, on arriving near Tudela, some monks of Albroy presented themselves on the road, amongst whom was brother Alonzo de Espina, a reverend master

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* Ep. 405, ap. Prescott. † Sannarazius to Cæs. Borgia.

‡ Otho of Frisingen, ap. Rader. Bavaria Sancta, iv. 26.

in sacred theology. When the grand master saw them, he regarded it as an evil sign. Now the monks came up, and brother Alonzo said to him, "Consider, my son, that this world passes as a vain image, and that it always badly repays those who have best served it. Receive, then, with resignation, the death which menaces you in punishment of the faults which you may have committed. Implore pardon very humbly with a contrite heart from Almighty God, for that is the best thing you can do at present." With such words they came to Valladolid, at three o'clock in the afternoon; and then, that he might feel himself overthrown for this world, the grand master was conducted to the house of the deceased Alonzo Perez de Vivero, who had perished by his orders; and what cheer there for welcome but what might cow his spirit! when those who loved him not, the widow and her sons, received him with their groans? This great child of honour, to add brighter lustre to his age than man could give him, died fearing God. He was beheaded in his sixty-third year, evincing the piety of a Christian, the courage of a knight, and the grace of a courtier. So low were his fortunes fallen, that it was necessary to place a basin for alms, in order to have means to bury him. The romancero beginning, "A Don Alvaro de Luna," concludes thus;—"This is a fresh example to attract the eyes of men, to show that there is no security here below which God will not bring to trouble;" and in the same chant the grand master is represented sighing mournfully, and saying that "the man who places his trust in another man provokes the wrath of God."

We need not remain longer upon such a beaten part of the track. Such are a few of the mournful facts presented by nature on this road of the unfortunate, from which we can judge of the phenomena in general. Such is life, defined in the dialogue between Alcuin and Pepin the son of Charlemagne, as "grief for the miserable." "Christ, in requiring us to carry our cross, only desires, literally," says the Père de Ligny, "that we make a virtue of necessity; for the cross in this world is inevitable."

Passing, therefore, quickly from observations that may seem common-place, more or less familiar to every one, let us proceed to remark what are the passages, amid this dread exuberance of woe, through which men can be led to estimate the supreme importance of the Catholic Church, and to acquiesce in the central truth by which it exists.

The first signal or issue may be noticed as consisting in the fact, that it is Catholicity which enables the unfortunate to profit by their sufferings, and to convert them into sources of great and everlasting benefit. In all ages, as at present, men have been rich in calamities; but we see proof that neither the an-

cients nor the moderns, without faith, have known how to make use of them, or turn them to any valuable and satisfactory account. "The best mind," says Ismene, in the Antigone of Sophocles, "cannot resist misfortune." Whatever philosophy might pretend, the grief of the ancients was useless to them. Intense, undoubtedly, it often was, as in Cicero, when writing to his wife and children, and showing that his bitter sorrow was aggravated by the thought that their calamity arose from his own fault *; but of resignation and the acceptance of adversity, as justifying future hopes, we can of course find no trace or anticipation. Cicero's despondency and despair argue no weakness of character in which the greatest and most illustrious of the ancients did not share. To bear adversity with moderation, and to hope for death, is their highest pretension, as when the Roman statesman says to Thoranius, "Nunc vero, eversis omnibus rebus, cum consilio profici nihil possit, una ratio videtur, quidquid evenerit ferre moderate: præsertim cum omnium rerum mors sit extremum †." To murmur against men and against Heaven is not the least common end of their philosophy, as when, writing to his wife, he who had made philosophy the study of his whole life concludes with these affecting bitter words, "Ego vero te quamprimum mea vita, cupio videre et in tuo complexu emori, quando neque Dii quos tu castissime coluisti, neque homines, quos ego servavi semper, nobis gratiam retulerunt ‡." Turn to which side we will, whether we explore the whole literature and history of the heathens, or confine our observation to the moderns, and seek among our contemporaries for examples of suffering without the communion of the Catholic Church, or, at least, without the adoption of principles originally emanating from it, as from their centre, for such is its vitality, that it often imparts a temporary life to things at a distance, the same will be the result of our observation—we shall find misfortune turned to no account, sufferings utterly wasted, thrown away, often the man—

——"Luctu, serieque malorum victus § ;"

who flies to the worst as his only refuge from the torment of uncertainty, exclaiming it is useless to hope further,—

——"Sors autem ubi pessima rerum est,
Sub pedibus timor est, securaque summa malorum ||."

Alas! these men of progress, the boast of your modern civilization, not to speak of their countless victims, know how to

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* Epist. xiv. 3, 4.

† Id. vi. 22.

‡ xiv. 4.

§ Met. iv.

|| Id. xiv.

extract profit from every thing belonging to this earth, excepting from their misfortunes. When some catastrophe overtakes them, their lamentations are sometimes nothing but imprecations; at others, they need such remonstrances as were addressed by Tertullian to those who still lived in the midst of Pagans, and in danger from their example:—"If, like Pagans," he said, "we are greatly afflicted at losing what, in fact, was not ours, it is a proof that we had a cupidinous love for riches. By such affliction we sin against God, forfeiting that peace of the Holy Ghost which we had received. Let us, then, be patient and cheerful when we lose the goods of earth, that we may not lose those of heaven; and, since we have a different spirit from that of Pagans, let us not lose our soul to save our money, but rather lose our money to save our soul, either by charity in giving, or by patience in losing it*." "Not all are happy," says St. Bruno, "who suffer persecution, for many lovers of this world, sinners, and criminals suffer persecution, and are not blessed in consequence, but only the more miserable, since they suffer not for justice, but on account of their concupiscence and pleasures, for the honours and riches of the world. And who can enumerate all the miseries, and tortures, and vexations which they suffer, and with which the children of iniquity afflict each other, that each may supplant the other? Hence the obscure shades of dungeons, the hunger, and thirst, and cold, and heat, loss of limbs and eyes, and intolerable pangs, which the children of the devil inflict on his martyrs; for Satan has his martyrs, and it is his peculiar custom to make suffer the more those who serve him best. Such are all who contend for avarice and iniquity, and, like cruel beasts, prey on each other—these are the wretched martyrs of the devil †."

There are also epochs in the world when a general calamity involves entire nations. We have lived in such times, when in society nothing seems to breathe, as in a forest in the moments which precede a tempest, where reigns a deaf immobility, profound and terrible; when the statesman himself will say, with Cicero, "Si quisquam est timidus in magnis periculosisque rebus semperque magis adversos rerum exitus metuens, quam sperans secundos, is ego sum; et si hoc vitium est, eo me non carere confiteor ‡." But this will be their only confession. Such fear leaves men often impenitent, as they continue to be when the storm has actually burst and made ruins. Salvian's description of his contemporaries might be taken for a picture of later times. "I know," he says, "that in Gaul almost all the more eminent men have become worse by their calamities. I have myself seen

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* Id. de Patientia, c. 7.

† Id. S. Brun. de Ornatu Eccles. c. 8.

‡ Epist. vi. 15.

the nobles of Treves, though despoiled and plundered, yet less overthrown in their fortunes than in their morals; for, though stript of property, they still had some substance left, whereas all discipline was gone. Enemies to themselves worse than even foreigners, they were more conquered by their passions than by the barbarians. It is sad and painful to relate what we have seen. Honourable old men, decrepit Christians, at the moment when the state was on the point of being lost, serving only their lusts—there they continue feasting, forgetful of honour, forgetful of their profession, forgetful of their name! I have seen these tearful spectacles—the aged differing not from the young. In both the same scurrility, the same levity, the same reckless abandonment to pleasure, to gluttony, and wine. Where such things are done, the city has perished before it is overthrown[*]."

Men avowedly incredulous and infidel in this age have been known to turn their calamities to an argument against all holy virtue. Sufferers from domestic affliction, "whose subdued eyes drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees their medicinal gum," have been heard to proclaim their resolution of taking arms against Providence in future :—

> "This did make them do a desperate turn—
> Yea, curse their better angel from their side,
> And fall to reprobation."

Now, this being the case, as all experience shows, it is not an improbable hypothesis to suggest, that some men will be naturally attracted to the centre, when they find that the divine faith emanating from it enables Catholics to turn their misfortunes to good account, and to reap from them both the reality of temporal, and the animating hope of eternal consolation. Selingerus, baron of Wolhausen, was elected abbot of Ensidelen in 1070, soon after his conversion, which was the result of his great misfortune. His wife Hedwige, with many of their children, being shipwrecked on the lake of Wolhusa, and all perishing, he renounced the world, and made his profession at Ensidelen, being accompanied by his three sons, the remaining daughter becoming a nun at Zurich—all whose vast inheritance, civilization not having assumed its new phase, became thus the property of the abbey of Ensidelen[†]. Thus proof exists, that within the Catholic fold the evils of life are converted into good. There, in fact,

> "Labour, and pain, and grief, in life's green grove,
> Sport like tame beasts—none knew how gentle they could be!"

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[*] De Gubernatione Dei, lib. vii. 2.

[‡] Bucelinus, Constant. Chronolog.

When Lopez de Vega lost his little dear son, Carlos, in his eighth year, and shortly after his wife, Donna Juana, he was overwhelmed with affliction; but he turned all his thoughts to religion. It was then that he wrote his soliloquies, which are thought by some to be the most beautiful ascetic book, and the most eloquent in the Spanish language. Thenceforth he seems wholly given up to God, and to have renounced all love which has an end. The stranger's father used to say, that King James II., who subsequently always styled William of Holland his best friend, had often remarked, when conversing familiarly with his grandfather, of whose intimacy with him the Digby family still possesses proof in curious miniature portraits painted by his hand, which the king, through friendship, used to sit for, that he hoped his soul would profit by the misfortunes which he saw gathering round him.

Catholicism secures, even for the weakest men, the great result of a deep personal conviction, that religion is the grand and important interest of man. When overthrown upon this road, he turns towards it, and exclaims,—

> "Vain earth! false world! Foundations must be laid
> In heaven."

There is no system in the world, then, of opinions or philosophy, which has attractions for his soul. The Catholic Church alone stands before him as adequate to his wants, and responsive to his nature.

But, in order to pursue our object here with some degree of order, let us observe how men can be drawn to Catholicity by considerations appropriate to their peculiar circumstances, according to the particular nature of their affliction, finding, under all kinds, some express motive that must attract them to the Church, which seem to address each of them in words like those of Dejanira to Lichas, "You do not speak to a cruel woman, nor to one who knows not your sorrow:"—

> *Οὐδ' ἥτις οὐ κάτοιδε τἀνθρώπων, ὅτι*
> *χαίρειν πέφυκεν οὐχὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἀεί*[*].

Let us observe here, that the whole phenomenon of life contains the secret of the twofold character of the Catholic religion. For the terrible hours of human misery, unseen by the world, the grief of suffering men, with which the angel of the Church so profoundly sympathizes, flying like the bee from one to another, to gather groans from their lips, and form of them a treasury of grief to be spent in torrents of tears[†], explain why she is at one

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[*] Trach. 437.

[†] Herc. Furens, 488.

time so awful and so austere, while the momentary smiles of the prosperous and the innocent joy of childhood might lead us to understand why, at another, she seems to provide only for the beautiful and the happy.

We come, then, in the first place, to an avenue to Catholicity from the afflictions of nature, through which those who suffer domestic sorrow can be led to appreciate the divine excellence of faith. The forest is conversant with songs that may serve as prelude now. Hark what strains the wind wafts hither!

"The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore-tree—
  Sing all a green willow;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee—
  Sing willow, willow, willow;
The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her moans—
  Sing willow, willow, willow;
Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones—
Sing all a green willow must be my garland."

Love, in its crosses and disappointments, is often the source of greatest grief to men—love not alone that to which allusion occurs in the Arabic verses: "I passed by an undistinguished tomb, in the midst of a garden, with seven anemonies upon it; and I said, 'Whose tomb is this?' The soil answered, 'Be respectful; for this is the resting-place of a lover.' So I said, 'God keep thee, O victim of love! and lodge thee in the highest stage of paradise!'"—but also the affection of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, and of friends. "An unmarried man," says Admetus, "can bear calamities, for he has but one soul; but to witness the sufferings of one's children surpasses endurance*." The modern poet expresses the same thought:—

"O'er the pale corse we saw him gently bend;
  Heart-chill'd with grief, 'My thread,' he cried, 'is spun!
If Heav'n had meant I should my life extend,
  Heav'n had preserved my life's support, my son.'"

"When a mother seeth her son dead, and carried to his grave," says Antonio de Guevara, "it is most certain that, where they do bury the body of the son, they do also bury the heart of the mother. Those who in one did live together, and descend from one kindred, and with one amity and peace entreat the one the other, is it much that they die together, that they end their lives in one day, that one stone cover them, and that one grave should suffice to them†?" Catholicism, however, exercises a

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* Alcestis.

† The Mount of Calvary.

wondrous influence on mourners such as these. Hear how a father, fearing for the life of his young son, writes to a friend: "Our little martyr still lies upon his bed, looking like death, so calm, but that a tear gathers between his pointed eye-lashes in the serene light of smiles. Three days ago, he received the last sacraments, making his first communion, by the desire of his director. Little did I once think that my hands were destined to light such tapers! Alas! blind mortals! we arrive at the brink without thought of danger. That day was a beautiful festival in our sick room. Our Lord seemed to come to play with the little boy; for, after finishing his prayers with great strictness, he became so full of smiles, mute and faded, but arguing such vivid recollections of the different things that used to please him, that we thought death and he were not to meet. The next day the fever and inflammation reappeared. The physician had again recourse to the strong measures that indicated extreme danger. No words can describe how piteous a thing it is to see his grave, loving face, pallid as death's dedicated bride, his sweet blue solemn eyes fixed with affection on all around him; or to hear by night his moans. He says, indeed, with sweet flattery, that he has no pain. We have many prayers offered for him; and a novena to St. Aloysius Gonzago has commenced. God is all-powerful. The physician says that there is still a chance—I know not. We have resigned him in the bitterness of our heart to the great God who made and redeemed him. If it be his adorable will to grant these prayers, we shall live to rejoice the more for having so wept; our poor little party will then recover one of its prime delights in this most sweet-tempered, holy, amiable boy, who never has been heard to speak one impatient or angry word, even in his play! who worshipped truth so as never to affirm any thing without adding, 'At least, I think so.' Alas! my dear friend, it is idle to let my pen run on thus. Come what will, there is One who has taken note of the gifts imparted to this child, who will crown his own gifts in a happier world. Enough! I touch his pale temples! I breathe my soul on him! I consign him to One whose love is best. This is a valley of tears, and it is well both to weep and to remember. May God keep all Catholics in holy love, and in holy patience, and in holy resignation to his will, ordaining for good the worst that they can suffer."

Already we observe how Catholicism consoles under such afflictions. It does not leave men in the dilemma in which Tacitus seems to suppose Julius Agricola found himself on the death of his little son, when, to escape from grief otherwise than by affected fortitude and effeminate lamentations, he had only to push on his war against the Britons to the Grampian hills:—

"Et in luctu bellum inter remedia erat*." Catholicism can inspire real fortitude, and suppress all effeminate lamentation, by the new and supernatural secret of which it is in sole possession, teaching men to fix their eyes on Christ crucified, and on his blessed mother standing near the cross. It invites them to visit spots commemorative of that mystery—lonely chapels, like that oratory recently erected by the pious and noble hands of Ambrose Lisle Phillips, upon the rocks at Gracedieu, where is beheld a moving image of our Lady of woe, supporting the dead Christ in her arms: and there, in that inspiring solitude, it teaches them to kneel down, meditate, and pray. The pilgrims of Betharram say to our blessed Lady in their litany,—

> "Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disce,
> Cujus vita mali tam grave sensit onus."

Catholicism directs such sufferers to compassionate the sorrows of Mary, and thereby lose all sense of their own; for, as St. Bernard says, "non fuit talis filius, non fuit talis mater, non fuit dolor tantus." And St. Thomas of Aquin says, "Dolor Virginis fuit maximus inter dolores præsentis vitæ." Catholicism invites such mourners to the burial of Christ. "Oh, blessed journey!" exclaims Antonio de Guevara, "Oh, dolorous way! Albeit, that the night was very dark, and the way very full of mud; yet no man can lose himself on the way if he will make that pilgrimage, because it is well marked with the blood which doth drop from the son, and well watered with the tears of the mother." It directs them, in fine, to Calvary, represented only in the Catholic Churches; to the cross which stands triumphant in them all, exclaiming, "All hail, O precious cross! on which death did die! the guide to all who travel, the school of the wise, the philosophy of those who are innocent." In the age of St. Leger, the abbess at Laon, St. Anstrude, had only one brother, Baldwin, left of all her once numerous family. Him she loved tenderly. When he was slain by the treacherous Ebroin, it was a sorrowful day to her. "No more affecting scene was ever witnessed," says Dom Pitra, "than when she met his body on the heights above Laon, and broke forth with, 'Comest thou back, then, to me thus, O my brother! Yesterday alive—to-day a bleeding corpse!' But the holy sister remembered that she was a Christian; and therefore she adds, 'Quamvis sim hodie desolata et frustrata proprio fratre, reddo tamen tibi, Deus, multiplices gratias et refero laudem et honorem majestati tuæ.'"

"Catholicism," says Dom Gueranger, "is the greatest school of sensibility which exists in the world. It makes men sus-

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* Vit. Agric. 29.

ceptible of the deepest and most tender sorrow. The tears of Clement VIII., that severe old man, on beholding the relics of St. Cecilia, evince an ineffable gentleness of heart." Catholicism, by directing this sympathy to a divine object, dispels the sorrow that it seems to cherish, and so attracts sufferers to its mild embrace, teaching them to say, with York,—

> " Comfort 's in heaven ; and we are on the earth,
> Where nothing lives but crosses, care, and grief."

Catholicism consoles also such mourners by its general counsels of resignation, and by the mysterious, ineffable influences of its holy celebrations, thereby manifesting its truth and its divinity. Man wills and intends many things ;—

> 'Αλλ' *οὐ Ζεὺς ἄνδρεσσι νοήματα πάντα τελευτᾷ* [*].

Catholicism reconciles man to this fact, reminds him of the vanity of his own will, and causes him to say, as if from personal conviction,—

> ———— " Nay, what thing good
> Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane."

> ———— " We, ignorant of ourselves,
> Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
> Deny us for our good ; so find we profit
> By losing of our prayers."

Some one, conversing with St. Gertrude, complained that she felt no advantage from the prayers of those who supplicated for her ; and for answer the saint heard our Lord say, " Ask her which she would esteem most useful to her little brother, for whom she desired the benefice of our church, whether that the whole value should be presented to him at once while a boy, or that the revenue should be preserved for him till he grows up and knows how to use it without squandering the money? Certainly she would judge it best to keep it for him. In like manner, God provides for the best interest of his elect by delaying to confer his favours upon them till the appointed time [†]." The secret of security is that principle which Catholicism imparts in its doctrine of resignation to the will of God ; and nothing else but its constant voice and its supernatural assistance can render this doctrine personal and attractive. The rest, however expressed in generally religious language, is mere rhetoric, vain philosophy, ineffective practically to console. Catholicism reaches the heart. It says, in the words of Alfonso

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[*] xviii. 328.

[†] Insin. Div. Pietatis, seu Vit. S. Gert. lib. iii. c. 81.

Antonio de Sarasa, in his Art of always Rejoicing, "It is good for us to consider that we are sinners, and that God is just, and that we never suffer unjustly. God does not visit us to destroy, but to correct and save us; quando male vivis, si parcit, plus irascitur." "God could deliver us at once," said Pope Gregory IX., "from such evils—but the reason why he delays is this—that he requires from man the gifts of compassion and love, of which he made use to manifest the end of all consummation, and the plenitude of his law, when he wished to present himself full of mercy for man lost and doomed*." See how living, how real and fruitful in results, become these high lessons. How readily, for instance, do they present themselves to the great personages of poets like Shakspeare, nourished with the doctrines of Catholicism, as when York concludes,—

> "But Heaven hath a hand in these events,
> To whose high will we bound our calm contents."

With what a personal and profound sense of their truth are they recalled by the illustrious men and women of the court of Louis XIV., still breathing the same atmosphere, as when Madam Scarron writes to a person whom seduction had reduced to an intense sense of misery:—"Give yourself up to God, fly the world, at least, for a time. Apply to some one who may guide you in the way of the Lord. All is vanity; all is affliction of spirit; experience must have taught you that. Throw yourself into the arms of God. It is only of Him that one never tires, and He alone never tires of those who love him†." St. Jane de Chantal had written in one of her books, in order to repeat the words daily, "O Seigneur Jésus! je ne veux plus de choix, touchez quelle corde de mon luth qu'il vous plaira, à jamais et pour jamais il ne sonnera que cette seule harmonie. Oui, Seigneur Jesus! sans si, sans mais, sans exception; votre volonté soit faite sur père, sur enfants, sur toutes choses, et sur moi-même‡." Indeed it would be superfluous to show that the gift of practical confidence in God belongs to all the ascetic souls of Catholicity. Of St. Gertrude's mind, we are told that "no event could ever cloud the serenity. So perfect was her conformity to the divine will, that she dreaded no kind of death, not even sudden death without the sacraments; for she said that, with a right preparation, no death could be evil, and without it no kind good§."

The Virgilian sorrow that exclaims, on losing some beloved one, "Mea sera et sola voluptas||!" will find again no remedy

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* Mat. Paris ad ann. 1235.

† Le Duc de Noailles, Hist. de Mme. de Maint. i.

‡ De Changy, Mém. de S. Jeanne de Chantal, 90.

§ Vit. S. Gert. lib. i. c. 11.

|| Æn. viii. 715.

to equal that afforded by comprehending and frequenting those perfumed rites of Christian consolation which every Catholic altar can supply. The mind is directed there from a shadow to the substance, from a faded to a perennial beauty, from a temporal to an everlasting enjoyment. See how unmoved, how self-collected, how intent upon his office, does that priest minister at the altar, though he has just lost, perhaps, his dearest friend, either by death or by some necessary separation. Perhaps he is surrounded by mourners, whose grief he feels as his own. Half an hour after the death of Louisa Mary, queen of the Belgians, the curate of Ostend receives her heroic mother, Mary Amelia, who had hastened, after seeing her expire, to the parish church, accompanied with her remaining children. Meeting them at the door, he addresses them a few words of consolation, and then proceeds to celebrate before them a mass of requiem, according to the invitation which he had already received, while a weeping multitude fills the church, although only thirty minutes have elapsed between the death of the queen and the celebration of the office. The man of God shares in the general affliction which causes each family to feel the blow as if directed against itself; yet how calmly he proceeds, as if nothing had happened, to discharge his sacred function without a tear; while the mother herself prays with dry eyes, as if all that remained to her was resignation! How comes to be thus unmoved in the church, in presence of such sufferers, a man so full of sensibility, who, on common occasions, like the blessed father Pierre de St. Hermann, of the Order of Mercy, martyred at Granada, "cannot hear of any loss, affliction, or disgrace befalling any one without weeping, and who, when asked why he so tormented himself about others' affairs, used to reply, that no member of Christ's mystical body should suffer without others suffering along with it *?" It is that Catholicity has rites which make heaven open visibly over mothers that lose their children, over children that lose their mothers; it is that it familiarises men with the thought of all corporeal things failing, and of all spiritual things enduring; it is that it creates a race of men who are accustomed to observe and to console all sorrows incident to the human heart. St. Bonaventura indeed expressly distinguishes, as the sixth cause for the celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice, charity and compassion for the living and the dead, there being nothing more efficacious than that great act for the wants of both †. What office of the canonical hours does not contain words from the unfathomed depth of David's inspired wisdom which can charm sorrow? St. Gregory of Tours describes himself in a moment

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* Hist. de l'Ordre de la Mercy, 235.

† De Præparatione ad Missam, cap. 8.

of tribulation taking up the Psalter, in order to find in it some verse of consolation applicable to his state*. History makes mention of several illustrious men who have been moved by hearing, as they crossed the threshold of churches, words sung from the sanctuary which seemed expressly addressed to themselves, to inspire them with hope in the moments of their worst calamity. A German author says that "our life is like a camera obscura—the darker it is, the clearer we see the images of a better world." But it is at mass, and at other holy celebrations, that the lenses are adjusted, without which the obscurity is ineffectual. There is the secret—"quo terrena desideria mitigantes discamus amare cœlestia†." It is then that the words of St. Gertrude are most verified, when she says, "that as a mother, wishing to warm her infant before the fire, holds her hand between him and the flame, so God, in purifying his elect by sorrow, interposes his hand to shelter them from being consumed by the too intense action of calamity‡." Besides these considerations, it will remain for mourners to take into account the miraculous assistance of which Catholicism includes the promise. In no age, and, least of all, perhaps, in the present, ought they to overlook this signal. "'Ecce quem amas infirmatur.' Remark,' says Antonio de Guevara, after citing the words, "how neither at the beginning nor end of the letter is there any courtesy or subscription; this is to teach us that a sign is enough, without prolonging words, when we address God. Oh, how different is the love of Christ for us, and that which we entertain for him! these holy women did not dare to write to Christ concerning their love for him, nor the love which their brother bore him, but only 'Ecce, quem amas.'" Formerly, at the bidding of the beads in England, the unfortunate might have heard these words alluding to themselves:—"Masters and frendes, ye shall pray also for all them that are sick and sorry, that God Almighty comfort them; for them that are in debt, or in deadly sin, or in prison, that God bring them out thereof; for them, for charity, say a Pater Noster and an Ave§." At the Catholic altar is offered daily the prayer of Sara, when she said, "Thy counsel is not in man's power; but this every one is sure of that worshippeth thee, O Lord, that his life, if it be under trial, shall be crowned; and, if it be under tribulation, it shall be delivered; and if it be under correction it shall be allowed to come to thy mercy. For thou art not delighted in our being lost, because after a storm thou makest a calm, and after tears and weeping thou pourest in joyfulness||." Mourners would nourish an eter-

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* Hist. lib. v.

† P. Com. Third Sund. after Easter.

‡ Insin. Div. Pict. seu Vit. S. Gertrud. lib. iii. 85.

§ D. Rock, The Ch. of our Fathers, 11.

|| Tobias, iii.

nal grief. "Griefs, they complain, are not lasting. Sooner or later they, too, must finish, because the heart of man is finite. It is one of our miseries, they add, that we are not capable of being long unhappy*;" but this affliction which they feel for the loss of those they love, by the very sense of its mutability, directs them to that Church which has the secret of imparting to short grief an eternal direction, so as to render vain sorrow prudent sorrow, fruitful in everlasting benefits.

Another avenue along this road consists in the assistance rendered by Catholicism to those who suffer from worldly misfortunes, from private or political catastrophes. Under such circumstances, to be told that prosperity is the sign of Heaven's favour, or a proof of mental superiority, and that all calamities are either the natural consequence of faults, or sent for the punishment of those who endure them, or, turning to others, to hear that whatever happens presents only the result of a blind fatality, are lessons of Protestantism and of its allies, that may direct some through aversion from them to the consoling truths which are learned within the Catholic Church. Protestantism, when it hears of any general affliction of a Catholic state, deems visible the pure anger of the Almighty. "And do you count your Theagenes for nothing?" was the only answer of the Pagan oracle, when consulted as to the cause of the famine, after the statue of Theagenes had been condemned to be thrown into the sea†. Protestantism evinces no fears or reserve when it hears of an uninterrupted felicity, like that of Q. Metellus, from birth to death accompanying itself. As the friends said to Job, so it preaches to afflicted Catholics, and says, "Observe our life, and judge of the perversity of your doctrine from the judgment of those who are dead amongst you; for, unless you were greatly displeasing to the Creator of all, he would never have visited you with such calamities‡." This is poor consolation; and if it should be itself overtaken by calamity, there remains no other instruction. When it hears such words as—

——— "Non vitæ gaudia quæro,
Nec fas§,"

it holds out no encouragement; it commends not the sentiment; it is more disposed to censure popery than to admire Virgil. It leaves the sufferer without any direction or hope but what he might have derived from an epistle of Seneca, or a sentence of Epictetus; for, though it does not, in theory, discard the cross, it seldom makes any use of it; nor would it, indeed,

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* Chateaubriand.

† Pausanias, lib. vi.

‡ S. Odon. Abb. Clun. Mor. in Job, viii.

§ Æn. xi. 180.

even sanction the application of its doctrine to the consolation of the miserable. Neither, on the other hand, does the rationalist view of life contain better provision for the wants of the afflicted; for to be directed to pleasure as to the summum bonum, when the means of obtaining it are withdrawn, can satisfy, methinks, no one. What a melancholy invitation issues from this school! It is always the same advice as that of Amphitryon: "Life is short: pass it in pleasure—time ruins our hopes:"—

> 'Αλλ', ὦ γέροντες, μικρὰ μὲν τὰ τοῦ βίου·
> τοῦτον δ' ὅπως ἥδιστα διαπεράσετε,
> ἐξ ἡμέρας ἐς νύκτα μὴ λυπούμενοι,
> ὡς ἐλπίδας μὲν ὁ χρόνος οὐκ ἐπίσταται
> σώζειν*.

Nor, again, is the reference to fate more consolatory, as when some infidel repeats the prediction of Gwenchlan, saying, "It matters little what may occur; that which is to be will happen;" or, "All unavoided is the doom of destiny." To whom the Catholic replies, "True, when avoided grace makes destiny." From all such comforters, whether belonging to the Protestant or to the more advanced school, there is an attractive issue which reveals the Catholic religion, teaching that worldly prosperity is no criterion for estimating the degree in which men stand with respect to the favour of Heaven; that calamities and reverses may often be regarded as divine benefits—the result of a special and gracious interposition of Providence in their favour; and that the fortunes of men are not the result of any blind, irresistible fatality, as so many, of all shades of opposition, pretend. It might, perhaps, be shown, that Paganism was not wholly without some conception of the truth in regard to the advantage of adverse, and the danger of prosperous fortune. "A prosperous man," says its wisest poet, "hears only his desire:"—

> 'Αβρύνεται γὰς πᾶς τις εὖ πράσσων πλέον †.

And Cicero goes so far in praising the effects of the school of adversity, that his words might be used to express the wisdom of constructing those ports of refuge which Catholicism, in some of its religious orders, opens for all who wish to profit by them. "Non enim hilaritate," he says, "nec lascivia, nec risu, aut joco, comite levitatis, sed sæpe etiam tristes firmitate, et constantia sunt beati ‡." Even with the Jews, the rule practically adopted by Protestantism was not, without exceptions, applicable; for,

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* Herc. Furens, 503.

† Agam. 1205.

‡ De Finibus, ii. 20.

as the Père de Ligny observes, "God took care to cause exceptions from time to time to the general system of the ancient law; and thus the just were proved by misfortunes, as Toby, while impious men passed their days in glory and opulence." On Mount Calvary, however, the question was set at rest. Catholicism has but one voice to proclaim the new law; and, certainly, to console those who suffer calamity, there is nothing comparable to its lessons. At first, in general, sufferers are shown the evils of the state from which they have fallen or escaped; "For the world," says St. Augustin, "is more dangerous when it smiles than when it frowns upon us; and more to be avoided when it entices us to love it, than when it compels us to despise it*." "Continuus successus rerum temporalium," says Pope St. Gregory the Great, "æternæ damnationis indicium est." Trithemius, addressing the Emperor Maximilian, says, that "it is a manifest sign of damnation, if one lives in sin, and prospers, without suffering†." To exemplify this lesson, many narratives are found in the old collections, which can be cited with more prudence than modern, or even historic observations, of which the application might endanger charity. "The keeper of a certain vineyard," says the author of the Magnum Speculum, "sheltering under a little covered spot during a tempest, heard voices in the air, saying, 'Cave, cave;' and another answered, 'Quid cavebo?' And the first rejoined, 'Beware of injuring the vines of Peter Richardus!' After the storm, these were the only vineyards that were found uninjured. This Peter Richardus was a detestable usurer and noted sinner. Hence we see," says that old author, "that such men have demons to befriend them, in a certain sense, who preserve them from temporal to provide for their eternal calamity‡." Acute sorrow is deemed so favourable a symptom in regard to the future state, that William of Newbury says, "The latter end of Henry II. was so miserable, that I hope, as God did not spare him in this world, in consequence of St. Thomas, he may have mercy on him in the next§." In the Mystère des saints actes des apostres, St. Thomas says to the king,—

"Mieulx te vault pour ton purgatoire
Endurer peiue transitoire
Respondant à la forfaicture,
Pour la rémission future."

All this doctrine of comfort is not merely without any practical extension on the Protestant domains, but it is even passed over

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* S. Aug. Epist. cxliv.
† Lib. Oct. Quæst. ad Max. Cæs.
‡ Id. 677.
§ Rer. Auglic. iii. 25.

as theologically erroneous. Thus may, consequently, the unfortunate, when visited with remorse, be drawn to Catholicity by the hope of turning worldly afflictions to a ground of reviving hope, when, humanly speaking, its sweet root had for ever perished.

We have had occasion repeatedly to remark, that the natural forest through which we wander is a school in which trees can teach us many useful lessons; and here an instance is presented; for "trees," says Pliny, "rejoice in the north-east wind, and become more dense, and luxuriant, and strong from the influence of its blast; so that many are deceived who try to screen them from it*. In general," he remarks, that "storms, rains, and wintry convulsions of the elements are useful to trees. Ergo qui dixit hiemes serenas optandas, non pro arboribus vota fecit†." He who prays for uninterrupted public and private prosperity may, in like manner, be said not to make vows in favour either of nations or of individuals. Catholicism teaches, that it is sometimes best for both to suffer pains and sorrow. Moreover, supposing the effects of calamity to be grievous, the advantage of experiencing them early is indicated by the noble sons and daughters of the wood; for, as Pliny says, "late winters are hurtful to forest trees, which grieve the more as their shades increase, and no help comes to them; for, in the forest, there can be no covering of straw provided for their tender slips, which had grown up too soon in consequence of the long-continued serenity of the season‡."

Variations in the fortune of man serve as important services in the spiritual world as those of the seasons in the forest; and, accordingly, we see that the just, in all ages, have experienced them. "They were suffered by St. Joseph," as St. John Chrysostom remarks; "for, first, not understanding the mystery of the incarnation, he was disturbed; and then came the angel, dispelling fear. Again, seeing the birth of our Lord, he was filled with joy; but great danger followed, when the king raged, and the whole city was troubled with him. To this fear another joy succeeded in the appearance of the star, and the adoration of the magi; but after this, again, succeeded fear, and the dangers of the flight." St. Thomas of Villanova treats profoundly on the state of the prosperous, contrasting it with the consolations of adversity§. "Prosperity," he says, "makes man forget God; it makes him proud, frivolous, worldly, vicious, worthless—a despiser of his neighbour, and cruel, brutal, and senseless—forgetful of death and future glory; it fills man to the very brim with sins: whereas, visit the house of mourners,

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* N. H. lib. xvii. 2. † Id. ‡ Id.

§ De SS. Cosm. et Dam. Serm.

and, as St. Chrysostom says, 'all things there are well ordered; there is much repose, much silence, great discipline; all things are full of philosophy; and not only men, but women and servants speak and act with wisdom*.'" "The unfortunate have consolations," said Catherine of Aragon, who so clearly belonged to the number; "but the fortunate have neither minds nor reason left." "What is the tribulation of the world," says St. Bridget, "unless a certain preparation and elevation to a crown? And what the prosperity of the world to a man abusing grace, but a certain descent to perdition†?" "I have given you feet," said the divine voice, addressing her, "in order that you should depart from the love of the world, and hasten to rest, and to the love of your soul, and to me, your Creator and Redeemer‡." Trithemius, the profound observer of nature and of human life, says, that "all calamity and sorrows are visited on the just for their purgation." The poor are loved by God; and see how great are their sufferings from boyhood to old age; Protestantism is not morbidly inclined to think of that; but how many things are they called to endure which rich men, at least, under its influence, would deem horrible calamities! "Besides, since there is no one, of any condition on earth, sinless, there are many men," adds the abbot of Spanheim, "poor and sick, pleasing God, who, if they were rich and in health, would sink to the abyss of all vices. Therefore it is not expedient for many to have health and prosperity; and sorrows are sent to the elect in supreme mercy§." Pliny says, that there is in Syria an herb called cadytas, which circumvolves itself, not alone round trees, but even round thorns. Such is the Christian soul. It embraces the thorns of life, thinking on the crown. Mark how unanimous is the consent of Catholic guides when it is a question of encountering this pass. St. Gertrude says, that "adversity is the spiritual ring of the espousal of the soul with God." She understood that, as the ring in marriage is the sign of espousal, so adversity, whether corporal or spiritual, is the truest sign of divine election, and, as it were, of the espousal of the soul with God; so that one may then truly say, "Annulo suo subarravit me Dominus meus Jesus Christus‖." "Our Lord," she says, "makes the journey of this life rough and painful for his elect, lest, while delighted on the way, they should forget their country¶." Pope Benedict I. is styled "very holy" by Anastasius, more for having suffered than for having acted much. "I know for certain," says Sidonius

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* De SS. Quirico et Julita.

† Rev. S. Birgittæ, lib. iv. c. 15.

‡ v. 1.

§ Lib. Oct. Quæst. ad Max. Cæs.

‖ Insin. Div. Piet. seu Vit. S. Gert. iii. c. 2.

¶ Id. iii. 75.

Apollinaris, "that it is the greatest remedy for the interior man, if, on the floor of this world, his external man be thoroughly purified by the flail of various sufferings[*]." "Heaven's own blessed light," say these guides, "is often shut out from the soul till men are taught to cling to the rock of safety, crying, 'O crux, ave! spes unica.'" St. Bonaventura says, "Magis eligenda bona tristitia, quam mala lætitia[†]." Henry Suso treats "on the immense dignity and utility of temporal afflictions[‡]." Shakspeare has the same thought: "Here is my throne; bid kings come bow to it." "Affliction," says Suso, "is the safest and shortest way. Believe me, the cross is the most useful gift that you can receive from the hand of God. Oh, how many were addicted to eternal perdition, and slept a sleep that promised to be eternal, whom affliction awakened and preserved! But you say, 'If I act so, perturbations will follow.' And I reply, 'Happy perturbations which effect eternal peace[§]!'" "It is far better for us," says Antonio de Guevara, "to be spurned at and trodden down of God, than to be crowned of the world. Oh, my soul! oh, my heart! look well to thyself, and take heed that, if good Jesus would tread thee down with tribulation, there leap not out of thee some drop of blasphemy and impatience. The husk cannot be separated from the grape but by force of treading. If the most blessed soul of the Son of God did not go out of the rind before that his flesh was trodden, how else can the offence of thy soul go from thee? Suffer thyself to be trodden. Oh, what a great comfort it is to hear Christ say, 'Torcular calcavi solus!' that He, and none with Him, doth tread the grape in the vat, and separate the husk from it! to let us understand that there cometh no tribulation unto us in this world which cometh not first directed by his hand, and which is not sent for our good. Torcular calcavi ego solus. No one else has power to tread or afflict thee in the press of calamity[||]." "But you propose a difficulty here," says Henry Suso, "and demand, 'Cur Deus amicis suis tot sinat adversa accidere in hoc mundo?' It is true," he replies. "As the Father loved the Son, even so loves the Son his friends, and He acts towards them not otherwise now than He has done from the beginning of the world. Hence some say that God has few friends, because He treats them so harshly in this world." The infidel, Poggius, makes the same remark, without supplying an answer. "But," continues Suso, "this is the complaint of those who are of little faith, and small virtue, whose spirit is wholly without discipline[¶]." "God instructs his own by anxieties," says St. Bruno;

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[*] Lib. vii. Ep. vi.

[†] Serm. de B. Andrea.

[‡] Dialog. c. 12.

[§] Id. 13. et Epist. vii.

[||] The Myst. of Mount Calvary, 51.

[¶] Dial. 10.

"for when He permits them to be afflicted here, and spoiled of present goods, He intimates that their goods are not the supreme good, and that this life in which they are afflicted cannot be the happy life which they expect*."

All ancient literature shows that these sublime views had been propagated through the world by the Catholic religion. Men of all conditions are found expressing them in the sense of the old French adage, cited by a great French statesman, "Misère humaine à Dieu ramène." The Cid writes to King Don Alphonso, saying, that he pardons his calumniators, though unworthy of pardon; that the secrets of Heaven are difficult to penetrate; for that, on the side from which man thinks his ruin may come, his advantage frequently appears, which proves how high are Heaven's secrets. "This year," says Mathieu Paris, "the archbishop of York's condition was deteriorated, as far as regards the world; but ameliorated in respect to the Lord; for his patience increased in proportion as his persecutions were multiplied†." Of Louise de Lorraine, widow of Henry III. of France, Pierre Mathieu says, "The best part of her life has been a sorrowful career of afflictions, more fertile in thorns than in roses—mais c'est le chemin du ciel qui a esté battu par tous les bien-heureux, et n'est pas raisonable d'en faire un nouveau aux dernier venus pour grands et puissans qu'ils soient‡." "Istæ afflictiones," says St. Bonaventura, "sunt viæ ad patriam et materia magni boni§." So Spencer's hermit says,—

"Ah, gentle knight, submit you to high Providence;
For who will bide the burden of distresse
Must not here thinke to live; for life is wretchednesse:
Good hart in evils doth the evils much amend."

Catholicism smooths, practically, the descent from riches to poverty; enters into minute details in order to effect this end; invests a small chamber and bare whitened walls with charms for men and women, long accustomed to live in tapestried halls; reconciles them, though familiarized from youth with palaces, to some small lodging worthy of being called, in the language of the cheerful Scarron, "l'Hôtel de l'impécuniosité." It makes men appear almost naturally humanly delighted to find occasion for practising the sublime, supernatural lessons of religion. So we find in an ancient book the following passage: "Lately, after the blessed Father Fulbert had returned from his Roman journey, one day, we read, sitting in our convent; and asking us respecting what had happened after his departure, when we re-

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* St. Brun. in Ps. xciii.

† Ad ann. 1258.

‡ Hist. de Hen. IV. lib. iv.

§ Stim. Div. Amoris, ii. 6.

lated the injuries that we had received from Fulcherius, he replied, as usual on such occasions, 'Malorum injurias boni æquanimiter ferre debent*.'" The martyr, Richard Thirkill, writes thus from prison to one of his penitents: "The world, dear daughter, begins now to seem insipid, and all its pleasures grow bitter as gall; and all the fine shows and delights it affords appear quite empty and good for nothing. Now it is seen, that there is no true joy, no object, no agreeable pleasure, that can afford any solid delight, but one alone; and that is Christ. I experience anew that the greatest pleasure, joy, and comfort, is in conversing with Him; that all time thus employed is short, sweet, and delightful; and these words, that in this conversation He speaks to me, so penetrate my soul, so elevate my spirit above itself, so moderate and change all fleshly affections, that this prison of mine seems not a prison, but a paradise."

Misfortunes are pronounced by Catholicism to be sent for the express purpose of facilitating the progress of the traveller by giving occasion for the development of his patience. "These are but the protractive trials of Great God to find persistive constancy in men." Patience—have you ever considered how inseparably it belongs to Catholicism? "The interval," says Rupertus, "between the issuing of the decree of Cyrus to rebuild the temple, and its construction, though long in the eyes of men, was, in the eyes of God, short and useful to men; that delay was as nothing; whereas the faithful, in consequence, acquired greater merit by their patient endurance of affliction†." To men confronted with calamity, the Catholic religion says,—

> "Be patient; for the prize I'll bring thee to
> Shall hoodwink this mischance."

"If wives," says the author of the Menagier de Paris, "must bear with sweetness and joyfulness, and in silence, the treatment of their husbands, mortal like themselves, much more ought men and women to suffer patiently the tribulations which God, who is immortal, eternal, and for ever during, sends them; and, notwithstanding death of friends, loss of goods, of children and of lineage, discomforture by enemies, captures, slaughters, losses, fire, tempests, storms of events, ravages of waters, or other sudden calamities, ought they to suffer patiently, and return and recall themselves lovingly and attractively to the love of the immortal Sovereign and everlasting Lord‡." Such was the language of Catholicism in the thirteenth century; and, in fact, we find that in all ages, under every form of manners, it has produced those great and resolute minds which neither misfortune

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* Fulberti Carnotensis, Epist. cix.

† De Victoria Verbi Dei, vii. 22.

‡ D. 1. a. 6.

nor prosperity can surprise. "In the French revolution," says the Duc de Noailles, "numbers of these great ladies, like Madame de Rambouillet in the beginning of the seventeenth century, habituated from their childhood to all the delicacies of life, were seen to descend suddenly from this splendour, almost with careless indifference, to enter obscure prisons, and to walk to the scaffold with calm dignity, and even majesty, in the midst of these murderers*." The result is very different where the mass and the rosary are unknown. Turn from Catholicism, and where do you find this concordant testimony, and these constantly recurring examples? You have very often, on the contrary, the bitter and horrible spectacle of despair even in youth.

What sentiment characterizes the modern civilization that has any agreement with the old popular instruction against this evil, such as is conveyed, for instance, in the ancient mysteries, as in the lines teaching you—

"Que cascune necessité,
Ne se doit-on pas desperer,
Mais tous jours en bien esperer.
N'onques puis n'eut cuer ne pensée
De cheoir en nul desespoir,
Ains est tousjours en Dieu espoir
Et en sa beneoite mere.
N'il n'est riens que Dieu hait tant
Comme le fol desesperant,
Car icil qui se desespoire
Il semble qu'il ne veux croire
Que Dieu n'ait pas tant de povir
Qu'il puist alegier son doloir.
Moult est fol qui en a redout,
Car Dieu peut bien restorer tout;
Toutes pertes et tous tormens,
Et tous pechiés, petis et grans,
Peut bien Dieu et veut pardonner.
Mais que on li voelle donner
Le cuer et qu'on se fie en lui,
Et que on croie que sans lui
Ne peut venir biens en ce monde †."

In a miracle de Nostre Dame de l'Empereris de Romme, the Pope says to the Emperor,

"Fils—prenez en pascience
Adversité, si elle vous vient;
Autrement ne vous vouldroit nient
Vostre voiage."

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* Hist. de Mme. de Maint.

† Le Roman de la Manekine.

Take the most difficult case of all—suppose national humiliation by unsuccessful war, you find that these Catholic doctrines are competent to meet the occasion. Historic proof exists that they were not wasted upon the crusaders. "One day," says Mathieu Paris, "as Henry III. and St. Louis were conversing together in Paris, the king of France said to him, 'Friend, how sweet are thy words to my ears. Let us rejoice, speaking thus together, for perhaps we shall never again be able to have another personal interview. My friend, it is not easy to express all the bitter sufferings I endured, of body and mind, in my pilgrimage. Though all turned against me, I am not less thankful to the Most High; for, in reflection within myself, I rejoice more in the patience that our Lord has granted to me than if He had given me the empire of the whole world*.'" "There is no doubt," says William of Newbury, "that those who underwent the pains of the crusade for Christ, and fell in it, deserve to be numbered among the blessed who die in the Lord, since they even died for the Lord. I say confidently, that the divine mercy was shown more to those who died on that peregrination than to the others who survived to return home; for we have known that those who returned to their homes, after enduring all their hardships for Christ, returned to their former manners. It did seem strange, indeed, that the Lord should permit the holy places sanctified by his life and passion to be occupied by an unclean race, but the event has disclosed the secret which is now manifested; for that gave occasion of suffering and penance to a multitude of sinners, so that in five years as many thousand souls attained to eternal rest as the Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all, had received for many previous years from the earthly Jerusalem, before it was lost to us. Thus our King attingens à fine usque ad finem fortiter et disponens omnia suaviter, making use of evil men, by delivering his earthly Jerusalem, for the sins of its inhabitants, into the hands of the enemy, provided more abundantly for the replenishment of the celestial Jerusalem†." The practical importance, therefore, of the benefit supplied by Catholicism in this respect cannot be overlooked. Public and political calamities cause this road to be thronged at intervals by men of all estates, to whom Catholicism would prove the secret of triumphing over all sorrow. There is no avoiding the occasions which require it. Priam thought that he had well provided for the safety of his youngest son Polydorus against such danger by sending him, at the breaking out of the war, to Polymestor of Thrace, with much gold; but the ruin of his country did not prove the less fatal to him‡. How many suf-

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* Ad ann. 1254.

† Guiliel. Neubrig. Rer. Anglic. lib. iv. c. 26.

‡ Hecuba, 1.

ferers from public catastrophes at the fall of the Roman empire! how many during the late revolutions do we observe attracted to the centre by the Catholic doctrine, by the Catholic admonitions! Amidst the crumbling ruins of the Roman greatness, Pope St. Gregory was heard exclaiming, "Despiciamus ergo ex toto animo præsens seculum vel extinctum: finiamus mundi desideria saltem cum mundi fine." St. Gregory would suffer no one to despond or feel discouraged at the political miseries of the world. "Absit enim," he says, "ut fidelis quisque, qui Deum videre desiderat, de mundi percussionibus lugeat. Ex mundi quippe destructione lugere eorum est, qui radices cordis in ejus amore plantavere; qui sequentem viam non quærunt neque esse suspicantur *." Sidonius Apollinaris, in presence of the same unprecedented calamities, inculcates the same lesson. Writing to Faustus he says, "Non remaneamus terreni, quibus terra non remanet; inchoemusque ut à seculi lucris, sic quoque à culpis peregrinari †." In all ages the doctrine of the Catholic Church has presented an asylum to men amidst public ruins and political convulsions, where they found peace and resignation. From Catholicism men obtain a noble and invincible fortitude to discharge their duty, let consequences be what they may. "Cheer your heart," it says to them,—

> "Be not troubled with the time, which drives
> O'er your content these strong necessities;
> But let determined things to destiny
> Hold unbewail'd their way."

Alfonso Antonio de Sarasa treats generally on the art of practising and profiting by this wisdom. He shows expressly, "quomodo calamitates cladesque publicæ aspiciendæ sint, ut per eas non turbemur ‡." "Publicis malis," he says, "acquiesce, quod ut facias, non clades ipsas, sed Deum auctorem et peccata, causam impellentem aspice. Fix your eyes," he continues, "on the Providence of God in all events and tumults, and you will not lose your peace. If any one look long on a wheel revolving fast on its axle, he feels his eyes troubled by the motion, and even his brain to turn. The revolutions of fortune are too quick for any one to look at them unmoved. You will be confused and troubled if you only consider the calamities and vicissitudes of the world. To be unmoved with fear amidst so many and such great alterations, you must look at the axle of the vast wheel, that is, at God, ever fixed, motionless, and who nevertheless, as the poet says, 'dat cuncta moveri. Hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum §.'" The world only says,—

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* Hom. i. in Ev.

† Sid. Ap. lib. ix. ep. 3.

‡ Ars semper Gaudendi, iii. p. ix. Tract.

§ Id.

> "Infelix, habitum temporis hujus habe *."

Catholicism has better consolation; and accordingly we see that revolutions are the harvests of the Church, when every path to her is thronged with those who carry their sheaves with them. Chateaubriand, describing what he observed after the first revolution, says, "Men had need of religious consolations long denied to them. How many broken hearts! how many souls left solitary upon earth! The crowd now precipitated itself into the house of God, as men during a contagion flock to the house of a physician." Alluding to still later revolutions, he says, "Il y a un grand fonds de religion en France, et un penchant visible à oublier nos anciens malheurs au pied des autels." St. Gregory the Great had made a similar observation amidst the political convulsions of his age, saying, "Aliquando nos mundus retraxit a Deo; nunc tantis plagis plenus est, ut ipse nos mundus mittat ad Deum." Solon led his sorrowing friend to a citadel, and told him to look down upon all the roofs of the houses beneath it, and to consider how much grief had been felt, was then felt, and would in after-ages be felt under the same roofs. This river too, that washes your capital, is like the Acheron—it is a river that rolls sorrows,—

> *'Ο τὰ ἄχεα ῥέων—*
> *ἰὼ βρότεια πράγματ'· εὐτυχοῦντα μὲν*
> *σκιά τις ἂν τρέψειεν· εἰ δὲ δυστυχῇ,*
> *βολαῖς ὑγρώσσων σπόγγος ὤλεσεν γραφήν.*
> *καὶ ταῦτ' ἐκείνων μᾶλλον οἰκτείρω πολύ †.*

True, the human race is never wanting in examples of manly firmness when public or private calamities overtake those suffering to the lowest bent of weakness in the flesh. It is never without wanting supernatural consolations though;—

> "For many strokes, though with a little axe,
> Hew down and fell the hardest-timber'd oak."

But each, perhaps, thinks he has a burden heavier than that of others. Let us then consider circumstances. It would be long to note the distinctions in the classes of sufferers whom we overtake upon this road. There are here, in the first place, captives and prisoners, whom we met in another part of the forest, examples there of the mercy of others externally manifested to them, now witnesses of the power of Catholicism to comfort in the secret temple of the soul the miserable. In the ancient grants of indulgence to the confraternity of the Rosary, for assisting at the processions, provision is expressed for those de-

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* Ovid, Trist. lib. i. 1.

† Agam. 1328.

siring to obtain it, who are prevented from assisting by being in prison *. The captivity of men whose innocence is indicated by the beads they hold in their hands has never been a rare instance of worldly misfortune. In the old Spanish chant beginning, "Beñando esta las prisiones," Bernard de Carpio is represented lamenting in his prison, and saying, "When I first came into this castle I was beardless, and now, alas! my hairs are white." Some pretend that the women of England, in memory of the poor prisoner Charles d'Orléans, and of his mother Valentine, chose for their fête St. Valentine's day. The suggestion is a compliment to their sensibility; but from the poems of that prisoner himself it would seem that the custom was then ancient. Catholicism, however, should be always in view to prisoners, not only as furnishing persons in every class who sympathise with their sufferings, and devote themselves to their alleviation, but also as inspiring patience and resignation in the sufferers. The solitude and reflection which naturally belong to the state of captivity will at all times supply some men with a way which leads to the centre and to God. "From the king of France," says William of Newbury, "men had hoped better, and from Richard terrible things; but, after their return from the East, the former began to rage against his own subjects, as if he could wreak vengeance on the king of England in them, and especially on monks and priests, whereas the latter, after his captivity, by the mercy of God was much more meek than before, so that the venerable John, archbishop of Lyons, who happened at that time to come into England, while in London sitting with honourable men who complained of the hardness of their own prince, replied, 'Say not so, for I can assure you that, in comparison with the king of the French, your king is a hermit †.'"

However that may have been, it is certain that men can discover, in the confinement of a prison, an issue to a personal conviction of the truth of Catholicism, as constituting the centre of all true freedom and felicity. Imprisoned in 1572, at Valladolid, brother Louis de Leon, an Augustinian friar, employed himself in composing one of his principal works; and such was the profound peace and sweet joy that he experienced, that, after recovering his liberty, in 1578, he regretted leaving his prison. Pelisson, in the age of Louis XIV., and Silvio Pellico, in our own times, supply memorable examples familiar to every one. At Venice, in the deep dungeons near the Bridge of Sighs, are traces of the prisoners who have left writing scratched upon the walls. One stanza ends with these letters,—

V. la S. C. K. R.

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* Leon. Fossæi Gravi-Aquens. De Rosario, lib. i. 7.

† Guil. Neub. Rer. Anglic. lib. iv. c. 3.

put evidently for Viva la Santa Chiesa Cattolica Romana, by some prisoner moved by suffering to seek consolation in his faith. Spain presents us with a great historical example of the benefits resulting to captives from Catholicism, as evinced in the conversion of a prisoner who passed from a dungeon and the scaffold to that eternal joy for which it prepared him. At Valladolid, a modern traveller remarks, the once magnificent Porta Celi, founded by Don Rodrigo Calderon, whom he styles the ill-fated favourite of the Duke of Lerma, himself the ill-fated favourite and minister of Philip III. Rodrigo, having made a vast fortune, was put to death by Philip IV. This is all that he says of him; but when we refer to the writings of a contemporary, the director of Marina de Escobar, we read as follows:—"Every one in Spain has heard of the good and exemplary death of the Lord Roderic Calderon, marquis of the seven churches, who was believed to have derived those singular graces by means of the prayers and alms of Marina de Escobar, who interceded for him so fervently after his imprisonment till his death, and also to the good use which he made of the counsels which she gave him, of which an instance was related to me by Lord Ferdinand Ramirez Farinjas, supreme auditor of the council at Valladolid; for when he came to arrest him at midnight, according to his orders, and when he told him the object of his coming, saying that he should put on his clothes and go with him, he obeyed him with such humility, and submission, and conformity with the divine will, that the judge and the officers who had to attend him were struck with wonder; for it seemed to them that more could not have been expected from a holy monk. When he had given up all his papers, they found the book in which he wrote his own sins, in the examination of his conscience for sacramental confession, and he gave all up." "This illustrious man," says Marina herself, "was my benefactor whom I had known for many years, and commended to God, and to whom I gave advice respecting his spiritual affairs. This noble man, so well disposed, was permitted, by the deep and incomprehensible judgments of God, to be terribly afflicted with captivity. Therefore I suffered torture in my mind, desiring the salvation of his soul, and then, in second place, his deliverance from this temporal pain. Night and day, during three years all but four months, I besought God to grant this prayer. Then, when he came to offer his life, with all signs of penitence and true resignation to the divine will, and conformity to it, accepting death by decapitation for the love of God, and in satisfaction for his sins, I experienced many unusual impressions respecting him in my prayers, for I saw him in the hands of a certain judge, directing all the cause to the end of saving his soul with a great

increase of merits. Though God would not inform me beforehand of his end, in order not to afflict me, yet I always feared what it would be, and therefore, to his relations inquiring from me, I could never give any consolation. Some months before his death I saw in vision that seigneur led by his guardian angel to a great cross, hard and terrible to endure, and invited to embrace and love it from his heart. That creature, seeing the dreadful terror of that cross, naturally recoiled and trembled; but the angel urged him to bear it generously, though still the fears of human nature contended with the inspiration of his good angel, till, at length that whole cross was obscured from top to bottom, and, falling down on the ground, entered it gradually, and sunk into it till it was nearly covered. The seigneur, seeing that, was terrified, and reduced to great straits, and afflicted, because he thought that he was tepid and uncircumspect in having resisted the angelic inspiration, unwilling to embrace the cross; so then, prostrating himself on the ground, he kissed repeatedly the spot in which the cross had stood, and adored and venerated it, and desired to embrace it from his heart. While this creature was so well disposed, that admirable cross, which was nearly covered by the ground and buried, began to shine again, and, bursting out of the earth, sent forth from it splendid rays on all sides, and appeared to be all golden and burning with vehement fire. The seigneur then embraced that admirable cross with all his soul, and adored it, immerging all his will into the divine will and efficacy, being ready to comply with whatever his holy will desired. After which mystery I gave thanks to God for so great a favour granted to this creature. When the day came which the divine majesty had decreed should be the departure of this seigneur from mortal life, by the terrible death of decollation, which was on Thursday, in the afternoon, the 21st of October, 1621, on the feast of St. Ursula, the same hour and moment when that creature ascended the place where he was to suffer death, and sat in the chair, I was led in spirit by his guardian angel, in the manner of a certain spiritual dream, to that miserable spot, where I was present at the act as if actually there in body. Then I saw coming to him a certain grave and beautiful virgin attended by others, who, approaching, looked at him sweetly and lovingly; on seeing whom he rose, and, kneeling down, saluted her, saying, 'You are welcome, my spouse, whom I have earnestly desired; as such I love and honour you;' and then, taking her hands, he kissed them, saying, 'You will be my glory, you are my hope, and my honour;' and, while he spake, that mystic virgin, which was the figure and form of the cross that he was about to suffer, raised him up, replaced him in the chair, and vanished. The

same moment the stroke fell upon him, and I was conducted back to my corner *."

Again, the sick, whom we shall directly meet upon another road towards the close of our journey, must not be passed by wholly unnoticed here. Sickness and bodily infirmity to many seem a state of pure misfortune; but Catholicism supernaturally consoles and explains such suffering, by referring to the inscrutable counsels of the Creator, as when Dom Gattula says of Paul, the monk of Mount Cassino, "ab ipsa infantia, occulto Dei judicio lumine privatus †." Catholicism transforms all such calamity, and from the bed of suffering presents itself with its ineffable consolations. Aristides, the Theban, painted the portrait of a sick person with such art, that king Attalus, as Pliny relates, purchased it for one hundred talents ‡. What inestimable pictures of this state does Catholicism supply to console, to encourage, and to guide the sick! "Sickness," says Salvian, "is often useful to the mind, ut mihi genus quoddam sanitatis esse videatur hominem interdum non esse sanum. I believe, therefore," he continues, "that it was as much by the great mercy of God you fell sick, as that you have now recovered; for you were sick, to recover the strength of your mind; and you are recovered, that the same strength may be henceforth exercised without obstacles from the body §." Catholic literature, Catholic history abound with instances of men proclaiming this truth as part of their experimental knowledge. Richard of St. Germain, at the end of his Chronicle, relates the event of his falling sick, and being cured by God's grace. "He hath visited me," he says, "and his visitation guarded my spirit. Lo, how good and merciful is the Lord, who in his anger forgot not mercy, for he spared me, in order that living longer I might amend what I had done ill! Therefore, I beseech you, fathers, give thanks to God for me, and pray for me, that what my possibility cannot obtain may be granted to your prayers. I send you some rhythms which I have composed in my sickness:—

"Quantum sit vilis hominis dignitas,
Et quam caduca sit ejus sanitas!
Nam omnis homo vivens est vanitas.
Vana est salus, et status hominis,
Vanus est decor et pulchritudinis,
Filius enim est Adæ seminis,
Qui nunquam sistit eisdem terminis.

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* Vit. Ven. Virg. Marinæ de Escobar, p. i. lib. v. c. 18.

† Hist. Abb. Cassinens. vii. 392.

‡ N. H. xxxv. 19.

§ Salv. Epist. v. ad Catturam.

In die Jovis ultimo Julii,
Post sumptum modicum quod edulii,
Hoc mihi accidit infortunii,
Sanus ut eram, et sine vitio,
Calami vacans in exercitio,
Mox alteratur sana conditio,
Et fit infirma, quod ita sentio."

Then he describes his friends:—

"Juvemus, aiunt, amicum debilem,
Amicum verum et favorabilem,
Et adhuc nobis, et multis utilem,
Ne forte vergat ad casum flebilem.

. . . . . .

Ad me sacerdos accedit illico,
Cui vix confessus sum, et me judico.
Virtus tamen de mortis lubrico,
Communioni Christi communico.
Sic recreatus ex carne Domini,
Particeps factus, et ejus sanguini,
Æger ut eram, divino numini—
Gratias egi, Deo et homini.
Inde testatus sum, non ut volui,
De bonis meis, sed sicut potui;
Mox consternatus lecto recubui,
Et nec in totum cuncta disposui.
Hoc intuentes omnes qui aderant,
Quod mihi ita vires defecerant,
De me diffidunt, et satis exitant,
Tuncque debere me mori autumant.
Tunc qui sum visus fore deterior,
In illa die factus sum melior,
Fit quoque morbus validus levior,
Me visitanti de quo regratior.
Oh, Dei mei omnipotentia!
Erga me fuit quanta clementia,
Qui morbi mutas hæc accidentia
Insanæ mentis convalescentia.
Hæc tua mihi fuit indignatio,
Non ægritudo, sed visitatio,
Utinam per te sit emendatio,
Quam decet Christianus et collaudatio.
Qui relevavit lapsum qui cecidit,
Me castigavit, nec morti tradidit,
Illi Riccardus, quem vitæ reddidit,
Regratiatur qui metra condidit

Illi sit honor, virtus, et gloria,
Summa potestas, summa victoria,
Cui mors et vita favent, et omnia
Vivit et regnat Deus in sæcula [*]."

These sentiments still pervade every Catholic religious house where sickness enters. Visit the hospitals of the brethren of St. John of God. You will almost desire sickness to rest under their roof. The mind finds rest and peace in contemplating that order, that cheerfulness, that absence of all hirelings; for there all ministers are hooded brethren, from the cook and porter to the reverend superior, who quits the altar for the bedside of the patient sufferer. Catholicism opens mystic avenues to itself from the state of sickness. What revelations of this kind are known to priests who visit hospitals, the sick chambers of royal palaces, and the cottages of the poor! Moreover, Catholicism assuages the grief of sickness, and enables men to endure its pain. "Calix passionis amarus est," says an ancient monastic rule, "sed omnes morbos penitus curat [†]."

Count Guebrianus, being wounded in battle, and hearing after the first amputation that the surgeons had to cut the limb higher up, turning to his confessor, said, "Let them cut as they please; that which is not useful to the body will be useful, I hope, to my soul [‡]." Moreover, Catholicism actually wards off the maladies that arise often from a morbid susceptibility. It has no imaginary sick. The poor, who are often the best representatives of its spirit, are often heard to say with Hotspur,—

"How has he the leisure to be sick?"

Catholicism procures strong minds and tender hearts for the assistance of the sick. "A Spanish friend of mine," says a recent traveller, "wished to send a letter by a commissioner to Madrid. 'I am sorry,' replied the man, 'but I would rather be excused till to-morrow, as I do not wish to be employed to-day, unless, indeed, it be for a sick person. Then I am ready to fly.'" One English friend of the stranger fell sick at Naples. A friar, without any previous knowledge of him, used to bring him fruit, and sit by his bed. Another was seized with fever in an hotel at Venice. A Venetian gentleman, who by chance heard of it, called, and insisted on his being carried to his country villa as soon as he could be removed without danger. Some again, in the ranks of the unfortunate, are directed to the centre of all

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[*] Chronic. Riccardi de S. Germain, ap. Dom. Gattula, Hist. Abb. Cassinens.

[†] Reg. cujusdam Patris ap. Luc. Holstein. Cod. Reg.

[‡] Richebourcq, Ultima Verba Factaque, &c.

security, as of all lasting excellence, by fire. "Profecto," says Pliny, "incendia puniunt luxum; nec tamen effici potest, ut mores aliquid ipso homine mortalius intelligant *." There are sudden calamities that impress on the mind an indelible sense of the vanity of all perishable things, when men can say of their possessions,—

"Tenent Danai qua deficit ignis †."

Two vast libraries, which Dom Mabillon had formerly visited, were already destroyed by fire when he wrote his Museum Italicum, namely, that of Gemblou, in Belgium, and that of the Canons of St. Antonio, at Venice. How many noble works of art, described by Vasari, had perished by conflagrations, when his commentators wrote their notes! Thus treasures that seem almost intellectual will be liable to the same fate as rich and pompous splendours. All will be lost—only life preserved,—

——"As by a mother, that from sleep
Is by the noise aroused, and near her sees
The climbing fires, who snatches up her babe,
And flies, ne'er pausing, careful more of him
Than of herself, that but a single vest
Clings round her limbs ‡."

The evening closes over a happy house—it will be the last night though that its inhabitants will pass within it. In the hour of darkness a cry is heard—there is but a minute left for escape—children drop upon their knees, and fly with terrified women. The stranger, too, little thinking that heresy intended such vengeance for his guest, is there, who seeks to save what is most valued;—

"He climbs the crackling stair—he bursts the door,
Nor feels his feet glow scorching with the floor;
His breath choked, gasping with the volumed smoke,
But still from room to room his way he broke."

Like one of the sons of Priam, flying from his once happy home, literally—

"Porticibus longis fugit, et vacua atria lustrat
Saucius §."

The flames have made such progress that nothing else but life can be preserved. Paintings and tapestries, drawings and manuscripts, the fruit of toilsome journeys, of sleepless nights; the

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* N. H. xxxvi. 4.

† Æn. ii. 505.

‡ Hell, 23.

§ Æn. ii. 528.

sketches carried in boyhood over Alps and Apennines, for drawing which no regions had been thought too desolate, no track too full of peril; the humble tokens presented by foreign monasteries; those portraits of departed friends, the sole mementos that remained of venerated countenances—thus literally verifying the remark of Tacitus, that "ut vultus hominum ita simulacra vultus imbecilla ac mortalia sunt;" all before that morning dawns have perished. It is at such times that men will feel the force of the lessons of the Catholic religion, respecting the need of possessions more durable than brass or marble, confined to the product of no material art, but to be attained by the mind and by manners. No eloquence more impressive than that spectacle of ruin, when visited some hours later, after storms had come on, and snow rendering more desolate the smouldering walls. It is nightfall; all is silent and deserted; in the dismal shell which once contained noble apartments some frail hangings, waving in the wild snow drift, seem like tall spectres passing to and fro. The niches can be traced within the walls, but their images have fallen. Perhaps the spot can be distinguished where stood the little altar which, on the last evening, had been illuminated in honour of a holy festival, before which children had kneeled in their devout prayers. The Spaniards say, "When you see your house on fire, go near and warm yourself at it." It would not be a sufficient comment on this characteristic of manners to say that the Spaniards have the disposition of the ancient Sicilians, of whom Cicero remarked, "Numquam tam male est quin aliquid facete et commode dicant*." It should be explained by referring to that faith which inspires them, which enables men to support losses with cheerfulness, saying, like Petrus Ramus, in all his misfortunes, "Grata superveniet quæ non sperabitur hora," and disposes them to seek profit from ruin, by converting personal experience of the instability of earthly goods into a practical sense of the importance of providing those treasures that are proof against all mischances, of which even the mere vague presentiment alone constitutes often a sense of bitter disquietude. For there are persons who seem ever to think that some unborn sorrow is coming towards them, whose inward soul with nothing trembles; seeing no immediate cause for grief,—

> "Unless it be, still with false sorrow's eye,
> Which, for things true, weeps things imaginary."

To this grief for something terrible in reversion, to this vague and nervous sentiment of insecurity, haunting the rich and prosperous, who would otherwise be at rest in their possessions,

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* In Ver. II. iv.

Catholicism reveals itself as the centre of supreme safety, furnishing the great lesson which imparts enduring peace—ut discamus perituras mundi calcare delicias, et in amplexu crucis omnia nobis adversantia superare*;" and imparting a practical conviction of what an old poet says when describing how the cross appeared to St. Francis in his dream,—

——— "Hic vera quies, hic meta laboris.
Pergito, crux omnes auferet una cruces†."

In fine, gathered in troops around the Catholic altar, we behold those who suffer the misfortunes which seem almost the natural and necessary attendants upon virtue.

We have observed the misfortunes of ordinary men like ourselves, and the signals which are presented to them:—

——— "Nos vilis turba, caducis
Deservire bonis, semperque optare parati
Spargimur in casus‡."

It remains to observe the sufferings which seem to be more especially reserved for those who are eminently great and good, and the openings from them which reveal the truth of the Catholic religion. "The blind mole casts copped hills towards heaven, to tell the earth is wronged by man's oppression; and the poor worm doth die for it." "At two things my heart is grieved," says the inspired sage: "a man of war fainting through poverty: and a man of sense despised§;"—in other words, heroic merit ill requited, and wisdom held in scorn. Such, however, is the experience that this road imparts. The Arabian proverb says, "Stones are thrown only at trees that bear golden fruit." "Have you never remarked," asks a great writer, "that it is into quiet water that children throw pebbles to disturb it? and that it is into deep caverns that the idle drop sticks and dirt? The calm and profound mind must expect evil treatment." It must expect to hear itself condemned, ridiculed, even by men like Lucio, when he said,—

"My Lord, I know him; 'tis a meddling Friar;
I do not like the man—
A saucy friar, a very scurvy fellow."

And only one solitary voice replied,—

"I know him for a man divine and holy;
Not scurvy, nor a temporary meddler,
As he's reported by this gentleman‖."

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* Prayer on Fest. of S. Hedwige.

† Franc. à Rivotorto Sac. Conventus Assisiensis Hist.

‡ Statius, lib. ii. § Eccles. xxvi. ‖ Measure for Measure.

The Venerable Bede, writing to his friend Heguina, says, "Your letter filled me with surprise and sadness, informing me quod me audires à lascivientibus rusticis, inter hæreticos per pocula decantari." They had asserted that he did not believe our Lord to have come in the sixth age of the world*. Those who stood faithful to St. John Chrysostom in his persecutions were contemptuously styled "Joannites." The just in all ages find many on their path like the gross Athenian peasant, who have no other reason to give for hating them, but that they are tired of hearing them called just. Now, in all such cases, Catholicism yields a consolation which, in old symbolic painting, was expressed by a ship whose sails were filled with the breath of men inspired by demons, impelling it forward, while angels stood waiting in the port to receive it. Beneath were these lines:—

> "Ecquid agunt, qui me fallunt, agitantque notantque,
> Ad portum imprægnant flabris tua vela secundis."

Valeriano wrote to prove, that whoever devotes himself to the Muses falls into misfortunes. With the minute patience of a German, he describes all the kinds of calamity which had, in his time, fallen on the illustrious men whom he had known and loved†. Hurter is struck with horror and mourning at the tragical fate of Baldwin, emperor of Constantinople. From being only count of Flanders, he had been elected, in the thirty-second year of his age, in consideration of his virtues, to fill the imperial throne. Pious, he spent some time each day in prayer; chaste, he required purity in all his household. Twice every week it was proclaimed in his palace, that no adulterer should sleep beneath his roof. A friend of all churchmen: full of liberality towards all charitable foundations; gentle and sweetly affable to the poor;—this was the emperor who perished in such torment, by so cruel a death, after a long and barbarous imprisonment in Bulgaria.

But, if misfortunes must be often expected by goodness in general, with much greater confidence may they be predicted when virtue assumes that true and lofty character to which it is exalted by the Catholic faith. We read in the lives of the holy fathers, that a certain hermit spoke as follows: "When I first entered the desert, after walking far, on the seventeenth day I found a palm-tree, and a hut, and a man standing near it, who prayed; and when he had finished, and said 'Amen,' he stretched out his hand to me, and asked me, saying, 'How came you hither? In what state did you leave the world? Are there still persecutions‡?" Fransoni, from the dungeon of

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* Epist. Apologetica. † Audin. Hist. de Léon X. ‡ c. 20.

Fenestrella, at the present hour, must return the same answer as might have been given then. Catholicism, from that day to this, has never failed to entail misfortune and persecution. "Do you ask," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "where shall I find the cross? Nay, where will you not find it? Wherever you turn yourself the cross will be with you if you only observe the Gospel; as St. Augustin says, 'The whole life of a Christian, if the Gospel be obeyed, is a cross*.'" In the dedication of churches, crosses upon the walls are anointed with oil, that the living temple may not abhor the cross†. The poet speaks of him "daring singly to be just, and utter odious truth." "Quibus docendi forma commissa est," says St. Isidore, "multum subeunt periculi, si contradicentibus veritati resistere voluerint‡." "Not to be in the wrong is, in the eyes of some men," says the Père de Ligny, "to be guilty of that which, of all wrongs, they are least disposed to pardon." As the champions of truth, so all who are employed to correct and improve the morals of men will generally find calamity in their train. The two mendicant orders had hardly left their cradle, when they were assailed by a tempest of persecutions. The same phenomenon accompanied the rise and progress of the Jesuits, the secret of whose persecutions may be gathered from these words of St. Ignatius Loyola: "Finis hujus societatis est, non solum saluti et perfectioni propriarum animarum, cum divina gratia, vacare; sed cum eadem impense in salutem et perfectionem proximorum incumbere§."

The mediæval writers seem to have thought, that in the single instance of the martyrdom of the count St. Charles they had an example which was sufficient to explain, in general, the principle which at all times occasions the calamities of the virtuous. "The malice of the perverse," says the old author of his life, "was excited against the good count like that of the unjust, of whom the prophet says, that they conspired, saying, 'Circumveniamus justum, quoniam inutilis est nobis, et contrarius operibus nostris.'" Amongst these men was Bertulfus of Bruges, whose nephew, Burchard, being at enmity with Tangmar, who was a charitable man, the count had endeavoured to appease his anger, and obtain a reconciliation. This Bertulfus was miserably elated with immense pride, from his riches and hosts of friends—quod profecto, ut fidenter arbitror, gratia Dei protegente ei nequaquam contigisset, si bona Dei creatura ad viaticum hac in valle lacrymarum nobis concessa humiliter uti, non autem ordine perverso, frui ac delectari voluisset‖. To such passions does the good monk ascribe the murder of the count.

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* De Uno Martyre, iii.

† Id.

‡ De Sum. Bon. iii. 45.

§ Bartoli, Hist. de S. Ignat.

‖ Fr. Gualter. Tarvanens. Vita S. Caroli M. c. xiv.

St. Justin Martyr says of Christians in general, "They love all the world, and all the world persecutes them; they are dishonoured, and they glory in their dishonour; their reputation is torne, and at the same time testimony is rendered to their justice and to their good works." Later times have not wanted examples to prove the truth of the observation. So deep has been the hatred excited against the Jesuits, that in some histories of St. Theresa and of St. Charles Borromeo the proofs of veneration given by them for men of that order were designedly suppressed. Was that no misfortune? Certainly, it was an affliction that only Catholicism could teach men to endure. "The peace of the saints begins," says St. Isidore, "but is not perfected, in this life*." "Væ mihi mater mea, quare me genuisti virum rixæ, virum discordiæ in universa terra? Such," says the abbot Joachim, "was Christ—such is the Christian people, and the Roman Church; because quarrels for supporting justice, and discords from the preaching of truth, must follow the announcement of the word of God†." "The holy apostolic see," says Pope Gregory IX., speaking of the German emperor, "while surpassing the wickedness of this prince by the mercy of its benefits, has beheld this dragon causing to issue from its jaws the water of persecution, as a torrent destined to inundate the Church‡." Most men, ere they die, see revived, in some region of the earth or other, all "the grievous times of the fair bride§." The Catholic Church might hold Virgilian language, and say with him who is expressly called pious,—

> "O socii (neque enim ignari sumus ante malorum),
> O passi graviora; dabit Deus his quoque finem.
> Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum,
> Tendimus in Latium, sedes ubi fata quietas
> Ostendunt: illic fas regna resurgere Trojæ.
> Durate, et vosmet rebus servate secundis||."

Rupertus says, that St. John the Baptist was the first to die for a testimony to the word of God. "The Scripture," he says, "mentions no one before him having been slain for the word of God¶." The victory of which Rupertus himself is the historian cost much suffering and much blood. To look no farther back than the latter times, we find that the same company of Jesus, whose sufferings from professed Christians in later ages have been already noticed, produced more than three hundred martyrs

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* De Sum. Bon. lib. i. 29.

† Abb. Joachim, super Hierem. xv.

‡ Mat. Paris, ad ann. 1239.

§ Dante, Par. 32.

|| Æn. i. 198.

¶ De Victoria Verbi Dei, lib. v. 5.

in nearly the first century of its existence*. What tragedies, too, do we witness in the form of detached episodes, occurring in the heart of Catholicity! St. Conrad, archbishop of Salzburg, after incurring the wrath of the emperor Henry, by siding with the Pope, when he was attacked in the very church at Rome, found all the princes and nobles against him; so that he took refuge in a cave in the valley of Admutens, where he concealed himself half a year. Then, during sixteen weeks, he was hidden in the subterraneous cellar of the adjoining monastery; and for one day was concealed in the river of the same valley, with the water up to his chin; after which suffering, he escaped to Magdebourg, where the Archbishop Adilgoz received and retained him †.

Every institution of Catholicity has been watered with the tears of its founders. The author of the Magnum Speculum testifies his sorrow at finding what opposition to the festival of Corpus Christi was made at the first by men who said, "Is not the celebration of every mass every day the same festival?" whom Cardinal Hugo so admirably answered. Persecutions and tribulations in rich abundance were the lot of St. Juliana, the foundress, which lasted till her death in 1217, as is related by Diestemius Blœrus, prior of St. James of Liège ‡. No virtuous man, again, has ever risen to correct abuses without being subjected to suffering calamities for having done so. Dom. François Delfau, the Benedictine, for having spoken as a Christian against the abbés commendataires, was exiled by a letter of cachet. We need not pursue observations of this kind, nor is it necessary to hear of the calamities of the just when assailed by heretical governments. Antonio de Escobar, however, supplies one allusion to the latter in these words, which may be cited. Speaking of the poor in spirit, he hints at a particular instance, saying, "Such as leave all to follow Christ and the Church, like the exiles from England, whom we now receive in Spain §." Thus pass to Christ, age after age, the best and greatest men, as is expressed in the collect of St. Leger, in the office of the monastery of Murbach, beginning, "Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui spiritum beati antistitis tui et martyris Leodegarii per istius sæculi ærumnas ad te transire jussisti," &c. At the sound of this solemn prayer, we proceed by an easy transition to mark more attentively the final signal, which consists in the proof that Catholicity has supreme and ineffable consolation for suffering virtue.

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* Le Père Bartoli, Hist. de SS. de L. ii.

† Raderus, Bavaria Sancta, ii. 250.

‡ In his Tractat., or History, De Revelatione Institutionis Festi Venerab. Sacr.

§ In Evang. Comment. vol. vi. 331.

In the first place, it consoles the good under positive affliction, by holding up before them, in a strong practical light, peculiar to itself, the great example of our Lord, which, out of the Church, fades into a mere historical form, to be classed with other cold records of the past. Without that example, supernaturally rendered living and constantly present, all other encouragements are generally vain, ineffectual, verbal; and therefore the Church at matins for Good Friday says, "Parum erat Dominum hortari martyres verbo, nisi firmaret exemplo." With that confirmation he indeed left them richly provided. "'Bibit de torrente.' The cup of his passion," says St. Bruno, "is called a torrent, for like a torrent it rose and fell quickly, and was turbid to the taste *." "He was delivered up by three," says Pope Innocent III., "by God, by Judas, and by the Jewish people. Of the first we read, 'Pro nobis omnibus tradidit illum;' of the second, 'Judas sought occasion ut eum traderet;' of the third, 'Gens tua et pontifices tui tradiderunt te mihi.' The first was from grace, the second from avarice, the third from envy. God delivered him up, ex dono; Judas, pro munere; the Jew, in sacrificium;—each to death, the death of the cross †." "With whom did he converse," demands Antonio de Guevara, "but he was injured? Whither did he go but he did suffer? In the manger he endured poverty, in the desert war, in Egypt exile, in the temple resistance, in the way weariness, in the garden agony, and on the cross death. Oh, my soul, follow and imitate him, seeing it is both God's law and man's law, that he who hath the inheritance should also take the charge which belongs to it ‡." The forest has its daughters, who are thought to sympathise with this great supreme sorrow. The aspens have their pale leaves in a constant tremulous motion, and, indeed, the whole tribe of poplars are subject to have their foliage agitated without being acted upon by winds; and this peculiar sensibility of the aspen, which is called "trembler" by the French, has given rise to some popular notions of a religious character; for in the highlands of Scotland it is thought to be the tree from which the wood was taken to form the cross of Christ; and the saying is, that for this reason its leaves can never rest. The tree, therefore, to such imaginations, repeats the lesson of Catholicity when, on the fourth feria of the great week, the day on which our Lord was sold, the Church, as Rupertus says, "trembles at the contemplation of such events, and in the introit, as if astonished, bursts out with the sudden cry,—'In nomine Domini, omne genu flectatur, cœlestium, terrestrium, et infernorum.' Seeing the Lord of all angels and men in an agony,

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* In Ps. cx.

† De Sacro Alt. Myst. lib. iii. c. 3.

‡ Myst. of Mt. Calv.

she strikes human hearts with this terrific cry, lest any one should dare to stand stiff and erect, when, on account of us, he bent his knees in such humility. Great, indeed, and pious and worthy," continues the abbot, "is the office of this day, in which the Holy Church places such a spectacle before our minds, and endeavours to lead the hearts of all her children by contemplation to the presence of such an act, and, by the voices of the apostles and prophets, as if present and standing near God, in his agony to excite them to astonishment and compassion *." Where such popular fancies are not associated with the trembling leaf, cypress, pine, and cedar, which three kinds of wood, as the Greeks in general maintain, were employed in the construction of the cross †, by the solemn gravity of their form and foliage, may be said to furnish a symbol of the consolation provided by the Catholic faith, for all who suffer the afflictions which are reserved in a more especial manner for the just. "Quicquid afflictionis terrena preparavit adversitas," says St. Gregory, "leve erit si inspiciamus quid biberit ad crucis patibulum qui nos invitat ad cœlum." "Requiescite sub arbore ‡. Quia hodie festum arboris colimus," says St. Bonaventura, "merito hodie sub arbore mente et spiritu requiescimus. Arbor requiei est crux Christi. O vere beata arbor, sub qua omnes tantam requiem inveniunt §."

In woods, at all events, are found berries like pistachios, of which some kinds, as those which grow near the monastery of La Trappe, have a natural perforation, as if expressly contrived for the purpose of forming the chaplets that holy persons hold in their hands when meditating on the mystery of our Lord's passion; and so we can trace a connexion between what meets the eye in the wilderness and those mourners who obtain support in their misfortunes by practising one of the most ancient devotions of the Catholic Church. Thus do trees and shrubs recall the dolorous mysteries of the prayer in the garden of Olives, of the flagellation, the crowning with thorns, the bearing of the cross, and the crucifixion.

Now, in the Catholic Church, as Rupertus observes, "by the mystery of the cross are our feet confirmed; so that in adverse, as well as in prosperous things, we can praise God. For what just man, seeing justice itself crucified by those whose iniquities proceeded as if from all abundance of fatness, who were not in the labours of men, and who were not scourged with men, what just man, I say, when any thing similar happens to himself, will ever now say, 'Ergo, sine causa justificavi cor meum, et lavi inter

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* De Divin. Officiis, lib. v. c. 12.

† Mélanges d'Archéologie, i. 226. Les PP. Cahier et Martin.

‡ Gen. xviii.

§ De Invent. S. Crucis, i.

innocentes manus meas?' For, if he should say it, behold the nation of the sons of God, nay, the passion itself of the Son of God, would reprove him*." In an old Christian painting, the Catholic lesson is expressed by a man and a woman kneeling before an anvil, on which are laid mallets and a book open, containing on one page the sacred countenance of our Lord, crowned with thorns, and on the other, his heart, hands, and feet. It rests behind upon a large cross, from which scourges are suspended, and across which are placed diagonally the lance and reed, surmounted with the sponge. Catholicism entails suffering and perhaps calamity; but who can hope to be exempt from either, let him turn to what side he will? "Mortal life cannot pass without the cross," says St. Thomas of Villanova. "Is it not better, then," he asks, "to suffer for God and to reign, than to suffer for the world and to burn†?" "A man must bear his own cross upon his shoulders," says Antonio de Guevara, "and not, as Symon did, another man's cross; for no man ought so to prop himself with the cross of Christ, as to forget that he must himself be a good Christian and a good man‡." Louis of Leon makes a similar reserve, observing that our Lord says, "'Let each one take up his cross;'" and adding, "He does not say, let him take up other men's crosses, but for every man to bear his own; which is in order to teach us that each must fulfil the duty of his particular office, and submit with cheerfulness to the sorrows it may entail upon him."

In the second place, calamity afflicting the virtuous leads men to recognise the divine truth of the Catholic religion, through a desire of those consolations which our divine faith yields ever by the example and instruction of the saints. Misfortune generally renders men more sensible to the grace of virtue. The figure of Valentine of Milan appears, says a French writer, "as an angel of sweetness and goodness in one of the most calamitous epochs of our history." It is in the darkest hours of tribulation that holy persons are recalled to memory. The little church, situated at the spot where St. Peter was stopped on leaving Rome, by meeting our Lord, who said that he came again to be crucified, is a station, as the Abbé Gerbet observes, "which is peculiarly loved by those who, after having already experienced sufferings, foresee that still greater tribulations await them on the way whither they are called by the voice of God§."

The trees in forests are often associated also by means of little rustic chapels, attached to them with the memory of saints, who all by tribulations reaped their glorious inheritance. "Deus

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* De Divin. Officiis, lib. v. c. 10.

† De Uno Mart. iv.

‡ Mt. Calv.

§ Esquisse de Rome Chrétienne.

misericors," says St. Thomas of Villanova, "laborum munerator, providit divos ad eos labores, aut dolores patrocinium impendere quos ipsi patientissimi tolerarunt." Therefore, for each particular calamity there are some especial comforters in view, who from having endured the same may be naturally suggested to the memory of the sufferer. So, in his sermon on St. Stephen, in the true spirit of that religion which makes light of no kind of pain or sorrow that our flesh is heir to, he says, "ab aliis martyribus alia petere consuevimus, et in iis, quæ passi sunt ipsi, similia patientium advocati constituti sunt. In peste Rochium; in ophthalmia, Luciam; in carcinomate, Agatham; in dolore dentium Apolloniam imploramus; Stephani autem lapidati martyris munus est, duritiam cordis emollire." St. Peter Damian says, "Nonne post memoriam Virginis, tam dulcis pietas vel pia dulcedo in cordibus fidelium observatur, ut in die tribulationis Nicolai nomen requiescat in corde, teneatur in ore?" Such memory of the saints includes imitation, resignation—patience like theirs, consolation like theirs. So, in the old popular chant in honour of St. Godeleine, the lines are:—

"Chantons de Sainte Godeleine
   La soumission et la douceur,
Elle fut en butte à la haine
   D'un mari, son persécuteur.
Si l'on m'offense, si l'on m'outrage,
   Non, non, je ne me plaindrai plus;
Les souffrances sont le partage
   Du vrai serviteur de Jésus.

. . . .

Compatissante Godeleine,
   Obtenez pour nous du Seigneur
La patience dans la peine,
   La sainteté dans le malheur."

Let us hear the Abbot Joachim singing his sweet hymn, De Patria Cœlesti:—

"O felix regnum patriæ supernæ,
In quo quiescunt agmina sanctorum,
Gloria multa decorata cuncta,
            Pace perenni.

Ad te suspirat generis humani
Perdita proles in parente primo;
Sed redemptoris cœlitus directi
            Morte redempta.

Bene suspirat tenebris addicta,
Quæ paradisi gaudiis privata
Perdidit lumen quo fruuntur semper
            Cives superni.

Namque præsentis luminis splendore
Fallitur cæca juvenum caterva,
Putans jucundum quod adimplet mundum
Fletu perenni.

Quid enim potest homo moriturus,
Nisi deflere miseras ruinas
Atque lugere incolatus sui
Tempore brevi?

Est quidem miser et infelix valde
Qui se dum vivit exulem ignorat
Qui non suspirat ad illius regni
Fœlicitatem.

O si quis posset in palato cordis
Illius regni epulas sentire,
Sperneret cuncta quæ jucunda præsens
Vita mentitur.

Nam in respectu loci tenebrarum
Mundus hic locus creditur amœnus;
Cœli respectu baratrum putatur
Et jure quidem.

Cur enim non flet homo peregrinus,
Qui supra flumen sedens Babylonis
Memor est matris qua privatur visu
Tempore multo.

O vere mater civitas superna;
Ad te suspirant animæ fideles;
Quæ tui roris pocula degustant
Cœlo demissa.

Claritas tua claritas æterna
Honor et decus in turribus tuis
Et per murorum mœnia jucunda
Cantica laudum.

Jam enim imber transiet et hyems;
Flores in terra undique vernabunt;
Et exultantis turturis os nova
Cantica procant.

Ergo fallacis gloria contempta
Mundi, quæramus gaudia superna,
Ubi sanctorum cunei lætantur;
Forte fœlici*."

Again, the calamities endured by virtue lead men to the Catholic Church, by showing them comforters, sympathizers, yet living in the flesh, who, from that centre, are continually

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* Abbat. Joachim, Hymnus de Patria Cœlesti.

deputed to tread the road of misfortune in quest of the unhappy. The Catholic religion supplies even the wicked with such friends. What will it not yield when goodness suffers? as Alanus de Insulis observes of its disciple,—

"Hæc docet ut miseri lacrymas, incommoda, casus,
Judicet esse suos, nec se putet esse beatum,
Dum superesse videt in multis unde dolendum.
Defendat viduas, miseros soletur, egenos
Sustentet, pascat inopes, foveatque pupillos*."

Who could, in the limits which remain to us, convey any idea of what the saints have effected for the alleviation of human misery? It is sufficient to remark, in general, that this is one of their objects in every age; and, without alluding to the institutions with which Catholicity has so richly endowed the unfortunate, we have only to open the history of any person eminent for Catholic piety, to find instances of the affectionate service which the Catholic religion is accustomed to minister to the wretched. It is the men and women who are influenced by it that address the unfortunate in such words as follow:—

"The world is frantic—fly the race profane—
Nor I, nor you, shall its compassion move;
Come, friendly let us wander, and complain;
And tell me, stranger, hast thou seen my love?"

Amidst all her sufferings, Marina de Escobar used to say, "I am not useful for any thing, excepting that those who assist me should exercise their commiseration†." What system of human opinions or philosophy has ever been able to detect this utility in the sufferings of the poor or the woes of the unfortunate? St. Gertrude felt such compassion for all the unhappy, that whenever she heard of any one in trouble, however distant, she sought to console him, either by word or by letter; nor could she rest till she knew that he was more quiet in his mind. No sick man in a fever desires health more ardently than she longed for the consolation of the wretched. This pity extended even to creatures, birds, or brutes, when she found them oppressed with hunger or cold. She used to pray the Lord that he would commiserate the afflicted creatures, and deign to alleviate their pains‡. Sudden and great reverses supply, by means of the contrast between Catholic sympathizers and the unplausive eyes of others who turn aside, a most impressive monitor.

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* Encyclop. lib. vii. c. 6.

† Vit. p. ii. lib. iii. c. 5.

‡ Vita S. Gert. lib. i. c. 9.

"'Tis certain, greatness, once fallen out with fortune,
Must fall out with men too: what the declined is
He shall as soon read in the eyes of others,
As feel in his own fall; for men, like butterflies,
Show not their mealy wings but to the summer."

It is, perhaps, in such times that the influence of the Catholic religion can best be appreciated. Hurter says, that the words addressed by Pope Innocent III. to the poor Queen Ingeburg furnish a most perfect instance of that true spirit of Christianity which breathed in all his letters and discourses, as in his whole life. "Our paternal commiseration," he said, "makes us feel all the hardship of your lot. But as you have been called by the conjugal bond, with your husband, to reign over others, we exhort you to rule over yourself, for your consolation, in the trial by which God wishes to prove your virtue. Support all disgraces, all iniquities. Support them with a quiet mind, not only as a necessity which cannot be averted; not only submit to the divine will, but accept it. Evince no sadness, even though things may happen contrary to your desires. With joy, and not with bad humour, offer your sacrifice to the Lord; for all that each of us can present to him in this miserable life consists of continual sacrifices, from which no one ought to ask or to hope to be delivered. Dearly beloved daughter in Jesus Christ, console yourself respecting your lot. Have a manly courage, so as never to waver in your perseverance, or mourn on account of calamities befalling you which visit not so many unworthy persons. If virtue grow nerveless without combat, and if its grandeur and its force be only revealed in patience, we ought not to make subservient to grief that which should, on the contrary, serve to strengthen us. You ought to regard the licence which nourishes audacity in the reprobate, as more dangerous than the discipline which fortifies the virtue of the elect*." Catholicism has a spot on earth where such high comforters reign perpetually to console the human race. "Whoever is not chained down to any particular place in life, should come to live in Rome," says Chateaubriand. "If he be unhappy, the very stones on which he treads here will speak comfort to him."

The peculiar consolations for the virtuous in misfortune, supplied by Catholicity, involve also a consideration of its profound wisdom, in having always recognised and shown the great spiritual affinity which exists between suffering in this world, and the attainment of that eternal crown awaiting them in the next. We have already observed the necessity and advantages of suffering, in general, for all men; but here we should cast a passing

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* Ep. xiii. 66.

glance on the signal consisting in the doctrine of the Catholic Church, respecting the use of that misfortune to which, in a more particular manner, the eminently virtuous are liable, as conducing to their spiritual advance, and to the perfection of their felicity. "No sound of instruments," says Bellarmin, "is heard in the house of God while it is building, because, far from it, the stones are cut, and polished, and squared, that, when brought to the temple, they may have only to be placed in their respective positions: so, in the world, all the elect stones, to the glory of the celestial house, are fashioned and wrought by adversity and persecution in this valley of tears; and otherwise no one can be added as a part to that supernal edifice*." "As wax," says St. Diadochus, "unless melted, cannot be impressed with an image, so neither in man can the seal of the image of God be impressed, unless he is proved by labours and infirmities†." "Not only of corporal, but also of spiritual sufferings, we must understand," says St. Isidore, "that the more scourges one receives in body or in mind, the more one should expect remuneration in the end. The elect are more tried than others, that they may desire the more their heavenly country, where alone is rest‡." "Omnis divina percussio," he says, "aut purgatio vitæ præsentis est aut initium pœnæ sequentis§." Virtue, formed and instructed by Catholicity, learns to cherish the soothing hope, that what it suffers has been ordained to answer the first of these two objects. The just are not here in their country, where is perfect rest, the intimate jubilation of the heart everlastingly to endure. "Here the elect of God must expect to have to hide themselves," as Suso says, "in corners, and to take shelter from the importunity and madness of diseased men‖." Here, in the misfortunes of the just, the victory of the Word of God does not fail; because, as Rupertus says, "his purpose was not that the blessed men, heirs of his benediction in this valley of tears, in this place which is allotted for weeping, and hungering, and for the exercise of holy poverty, should mount on chargers and chariots, and should have power and dominion after the manner of the Gentile kings; but his purpose was, that his saints, and all the elect, should be pilgrims and exiles in this world, and expect that kingdom of which the Lord is God¶." We wonder to see persons, whose whole aim seems to be to serve God, suffering affliction; but Pope St. Gregory explains this in the lesson read on Quasimodo Sunday: "Electos vero Apostolos Dominus non ad mundi gaudia, sed

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* De Æterna Felicitate Sanctorum, lib. ii.

† S. Diadoch. de Perfect. Spiritual. c. 94.

‡ De Sum. Bon. iii. c. 1.

§ Id. iii. 2.

‖ Dialog. 12.

¶ De Vict. Verbi Dei, x. 25.

sicut ipse missus est, ad passiones in mundum mittit. Quia ergo et Filius amatur a Patre, et tamen ad passionem mittitur; ita et discipuli a Domino amantur, qui tamen ad passionem mittuntur in mundum." "Beware!" exclaims Schiller. "The different destinies of mankind are balanced with terrible nicety. The scale of life which sinks here will rise there; and that which rises here will sink there. What was here temporary affliction will there be eternal triumph; and what here was temporary triumph will there be eternal despair." St. Isidore of Seville shows that the Christian life is a combat. "You will affirm, perhaps," he says, "that, princes being now Christian, there is no longer any persecution, at least in Christendom; but this is an error; for whoever will live with piety in Jesus Christ will be persecuted by the profane. All within the bosom of the Church, who live as her true children, must expect opprobrium, ridicule, and suffering from those who are of the world. Ista vere est illa generalis persecutio*." "Indeed," says Antonio de Guevara, "one of the things which aid most my heart to be firm in the Christian religion is, that, since the faithful Church was founded, the most powerful kings and kingdoms have tried to hunt it down, and have been its enemies; while the poor and simple alone have defended it and been its protectors†."

Catholicity steels the mind of the just against the reproaches which must be their portion. "Tunc primum despicienda humana detractio," says St. Cæsarius, "cum Christus in causa est‡." "You are persecuted, wronged, but why do you regard the man?" asks St. Thomas of Villanova; "observe rather the divine Justice, whose minister he is. You have not injured the man; but you have offended God§." "I can be confounded temporally," says Savonarola, "both by thee, O my God, and by all men; but I shall not be confounded eternally; for in thee have I hoped‖." "I congratulate you," says St. Paulinus, writing to Aprus, "on this proof that you are become an imitator of Christ, since now the world hates you. O beata injuria, displicere cum Christo! Magis nobis timendus est amor talium quibus sine Christo placetur. Non enim te, sed illum qui in te esse cœpit, oderunt; cujus opus est in te et humilitas quam contemnunt, et castitas quam detestantur. From the beginning Christ has suffered in his members: in Abel, slain by his brother; in Noah, mocked by his son; in Abraham, an exile; in Isaac, offered up; in Joseph, sold; in Moses, exposed; in

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* S. Isidore, Combat of Christians, Pref.

† L'Horloge des Princes, liv. i. 56.

‡ Epist. S. Cæs. i.

§ Fer. 6 ante 1 Dom. Quad.

‖ In Ps. In te, Dom., speravi.

the prophets, stoned; in the apostles and martyrs, tortured and put to death[*]."

Catholicity consoles by inspiring confidence when virtue suffers for a spiritual cause. It proclaims adversity and persecution to be its complement and perfection, of which it sees an emblem in the wind taking a pleasure, as Calderon says, "in forming a crown for the eagle by raising the feathers that surround its head." It imparts the spirit with which St. Leger bore his calamities and tortures, so beautifully expressed in the epistle of consolation which he wrote to his mother Sigrade. It reminds the sufferer that this is the school of wisdom to which the prophet alludes when saying, "De excelso misit ignem in ossibus meis et erudivit me[†];" that it is an external sign of charity, as St. Bonaventura says, "if all adverse things be patiently and cheerfully endured; if we be prepared to renounce all and follow Christ; if nothing be feared but God alone[‡];"—that, as Dante was admonished when he saw the purifying woe, we should ponder not the form of suffering, but think on what succeeds[§]; that, as our own great poet, who transmits old Catholic traditions, says so beautifully, and in such strict conformity with them, "'Tis good to be a man more sinned against than sinning;" and, in fine, that it is only what suffers that endures; for, as St. Gregory says, "transit quod extollitur, permanet quod punitur[‖]." With such principles, I think affliction may subdue the cheek, but not take in the mind. Father Lewis de Ponte, after his death, appeared to Marina de Escobar, and told her to remember, that "among the favours and gifts of God the cross is never wanting; and that the cross never comes so solitary as not to be tempered with the sweetness of our Lord[¶]." This, we may remark in passing, is what escapes from despotism. It constitutes, like honour, the soul of martyrs; as a great French writer says, "Bonds fetter them, and they are not chained; it pierces through the vault of prisons, and carries with it the whole man." They who desire constancy, therefore, in the midst of adverse fortune, will turn to Catholicity their looks; for they will perceive, with St. Isidore, that in proportion as the reproaches and persecutions of men are multiplied, the mind, by means of faith and holy discipline, is strengthened, so that it may only so much the more solidly adhere internally to God as it is externally despised by human senses[**]. Then triumphs the hardy, easily contented

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[*] Div. Paulini Epist. xxix. ad Aprum.

[†] Hierom.

[‡] De Sept. Itineribus Æter.

[§] Purg. 10.

[‖] Mor. v. 1.

[¶] Vit. Marin. p. ii. lib. ii. c. 29.

[**] De Sum. Bon. ii. 29.

spirit, which will not be subdued by fortune's scantiness, as appearing like the ash amidst the mountain forest, that waves its slender branches over some precipice which just affords it soil sufficient for its footing. "Neque enim vir fortis est," says St. Bernard, "cui non crescit animus in ipsa rerum difficultate."

Catholicity renders the most unfortunate the most tranquil of men. It produces that imperturbable calm, that supernatural peace which so distinguished St. Ignatius of Loyola, after his conversion, amidst all the perils and persecutions of his agitated life. On occasions when it might be thought that "the tongue's office should be prodigal to breathe the abundant dolour of the heart," no angry complaints are heard; no one here is copious in exclaims; for why should such calamity be full of words? "Our Lord's words," says Antonio de Guavara, "were few between his seizure and his crucifixion, to teach us that in time of persecution and sorrow we ought to make use rather of holy patience than of eloquence *." "I addressed no vows to Heaven," says a French author, "but it heard the voice of my secret misery; for I suffered; and sufferings pray." We only hear the public voice of the Church when the just in silence respond with their hearts to the priest saying with a loud voice, "Receive, O Lord, our vows with pious favour, ut, dum dona tua in tribulatione percipimus, de consolatione nostra in tuo amore crescamus †." St. Benedict appeared in a vision to Marina de Escobar, and said to her, "The dolours are short, but the repose is for ever ‡."

It remains to observe the last signal on this road, pointing through another issue at the Catholic religion, as securing for the calamities of virtue not unfrequently a temporal and material, as well as an everlasting consolation. Fearful is the dawn, loathsome the song of early birds, to him who wakens after experiencing or fearing some great calamity. Nature's loveliest vision, and her most sweet refreshment—those pure ethereal mornings when the sky displays itself in all its magnificence, having watered the earth with dew, fall powerless on his senses. The Church is a new world. It has new mornings, new zephyrs, and they who closed their eyes in sorrow awake in joy to see the glories and to feel the enchantment of a sun that puts grief to flight, and that sheds over the soul a cloudless and an everlasting serenity. The just have been attached to the cross with our divine Saviour; but "let no man despair in troubles," says Antonio de Guevara; "let no man be dismayed in tribulations, for when he doth least look for it, and least think of it, our Lord will raise up unto him another Joseph of Arimathea, who will

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* Epist. lib. ii. 1.

† P. C. of Rogation Mond.

‡ Vit. Mar. p. ii. lib. ii. c. 33.

take him from the cross on which the world doth crucify him, and give his sorrowful heart the sepulchre of comfort *."

Exultabunt ossa humiliata. The Catholic Church, no inconsiderable portion of the human race, in the first place deems it an obligation to honour and relieve the most obscure member whose misfortunes can be traced to his discharge of duty. "Christianum Catholicum," say the Canons, "qui pro Catholica fide et pro ecclesiasticis rebus et Christiana religione tribulationes patitur, omni honore a sacerdotibus honorandum etiam et per diaconum victus ei ministretur †." After all, the world itself is often called upon to witness the consolations of the just, when they have been long unfortunate, and the singular reparation provided for them by the remorse of their enemies and the restoration of their own outraged rights. What an unexpected and consoling termination was witnessed to the sad protracted tragedy of Ingeburga's woes, when after twenty years of being repudiated, and seventeen of imprisonment, Philippe-Auguste, through the instrumentality of the Church, was reconciled to her! All France uttered a cry of joy, for the people found nothing else to blame in their king but this treatment of a virtuous wife, who had moved all hearts by her calamities. Nothing could exceed her pious gratitude: the conjugal union was thenceforth no more troubled. The king honoured her by a testamentary disposition, and she, who survived him fourteen years, provided for his soul by a rich foundation in the church of Corbeil, where her body afterwards reposed, and where mass was offered daily for the repose of his soul. "Magnificent image," exclaims Hurter, "of a Christian forgiveness ‡." The commandant who led Pope Pius VII. prisoner into France, took an unfrequented road through the forests. To his great astonishment he found himself in the midst of a lonely illumination—a lamp had been attached to every tree. How many have we seen in these later times attached to the cross by the world hostile to the Catholic Church, and therefore animated with hatred against those who were deemed her representatives; and again, to resume the figurative language of Antonio de Guevara, taken from the cross by some other Josephs of Arimathea, and given the sepulchre of comfort! Drost Vischering, archbishop of Cologne, Charles X., the heroes of the Sunderbond, Pius IX., Fransoni, archbishop of Turin, Marongiu-Nurra, archbishop of Cagliari, what course of uninterrupted prosperity can be compared to the respect and veneration of which they became the objects, and to the glory of innocence, and sanctity, and justice

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* Myst. of Mt. Calvary.

† Burchardi Decret. lib. xv. c. 33.

‡ Hurter, Geschichte Inn. III. Id. lib. 16.

which they have already obtained on the imperishable page which transmits their titles to posterity. The City of the Three Kings, like Turin at this present moment, beholds her pastor carried off to prison as a malefactor, and the same pastor recognised the next day, by the voice of Christendom, as a universal Father, and an immortal example. Charles X. is driven from his throne by a base and remorseless faction; but to the dark time-worn castle of Prague, which receives him in his sorrowful exile, there soon comes a visitor whose pen, an instrument of Heaven's high retributive justice, will transmit to the latest posterity not alone a knowledge of his virtue, but, we may confidently add, a deathless veneration for his memory. And besides, even where the triumph is not thus quickly granted, the result assured by Catholicism, later at least to suffering virtue, is sufficient for the purpose of attracting men to the centre, where it can be relied upon. The calamity is hard, the sorrow perhaps intense; to the world, that seems successful in its aim, the Catholic religion says, " Hæc est hora vestra, et potestas tenebrarum ;" but this is not a state of things to last for ever. Oh, no! The world has its hour, and God his eternity. The knowledge, therefore, of the blessed Trinity by the Holy Ghost is said by Rupertus to be the great perpetual consolation of the saints wayfaring in this world, by which being supported they endure patiently, yea gratefully, that the world should hate, reprove, exile, persecute, scourge, and slay them, praying for it the while with sighs unutterable. It is for this reason, he adds, that the term Paraclete is used, as it is the peculiar operation of the Holy Ghost to be the supreme Comforter *, dwelling for ever by an irrevocable decree in the Catholic Church, and thence communicating Himself to all who come to her. But here must close

> " Les plaisans promenoirs de ces longues allées,
> Où tant d'afflictions ont esté consolees."

We have seen how mourners can be conducted to Catholicism by signals and avenues presented to them amidst the afflictions of nature, amidst worldly calamities, whether personal or general, and, in fine, by means of the sufferings which are so often the rough brake that virtue must go through. The roads which correspond with the experimental foretaste of eternal things having therefore now been partially explored, following him whom Jean Bouchet styles le Traverseur des voies perilleuses, it remains to enter upon the last district of the forest of life, where, leaving what St. Augustin calls the " vias distortas in quibus ambulant qui ponunt ad Deum tergum et non faciem †,"

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* De Div. Officiis, lib. x. c. 6.

† Conf. ii. 3.

we shall enter upon those which display the consequence of deiform operation. And look! what thy soul holds dear, imagine it to lie that way thou goest.

> "As yet these high wild hills and rough uneven paths
> Draw out our miles and make them wearisome."

Our roads of late have proved sorrowful and long. Like Hermia in the forest of illusions, I can cry,—

> "Never so weary, never so in woe,
> Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers;
> I can no further crawl, no further go;
> Here will I rest me till the break of day!
> Heaven direct us to a happier way."

Henceforth, no one need fear or mourn for what will be said and seen in the woods.

> "And lo! already, as at evening hour
> Of twilight, new appearances through heaven
> Peer with faint glimmer, doubtfully descried,
> So here new scenery, methinks, begins
> To rise in view *."

* Par. 14.

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

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